Mind the Map. Representations of English Local Cultures – A Study of the Textbook Series *Smart Moves* and English People's Interviews

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Kulttuurinopetuksessa osana kieltenopetusta tulee huomioda kunkin kielialueen paikalliset kulttuurit ja perinteet, arkielämä sekä identiteetit. Tässä tutkimuksessa verrataan Englannin paikalliskulttuureiden esiintymistä yläkoulun englannin oppikirjasarjassa *Smart Moves* ja englantilaisten haastatteluissa.

Laadullisen sisällönanalyysin keinoin pyritään selvittämään, millä tavalla oppikirjojen ja haastattelujen kulttuuriset representaatiot eroavat, ja mitä yhtäläisyyksiä representaatioiden välillä on. Tutkimusta varten on haastateltu 20 englantilaista nuorta aikuista heidän kotiseutujensa paikallisten kulttuurien erityispiirteistä ja heidän paikallisista kulttuuri-identiteeteistään. Oppikirjojen analyysiin otetaan mukaan kaikki sellaiset esimerkit, joissa esiintyy englantilaisia paikannimiä, kaupunkeja tai kyliä. Vertailun helpottamiseksi nämä esiintymät ryhmitellään haastattelukysymyksistä ja -materiaalista nousevien teemojen mukaisiksi aihekokonaisuuksiksi.

Tutkimuksessa todetaan oppikirjoista löytyvän jonkin verran paikalliskulttuurien kuvauksia, mutta informanttien kulttuurikuvausten huomataan olevan näitä monilta osin rikkaampia ja yksityiskohtaisempia. Oppikirjat keskittyvät kaupunkiympäristön kuvaukseen ja erityisesti pääkaupunkiin. Haastattelumateriaali tuo monipuolisemmin esiin erikokoisten kaupunkien ja kylien kulttuuriperinteitä, urheilua, vapaa-ajan viettoa ja muuta arkielämää. Erityisesti haastateltavien antamien henkilökohtaisten esimerkkien avulla päästään lähemmäksi eri puolilta Englantia kotoisin olevien ihmisten kokemusmaailmaa ja heidän alueellisia ja paikallisia identiteettejään.

Avainsanat: paikalliskulttuurit, kulttuuri-identiteetti, representaatiot, oppikirja-analyysi, haastattelututkimus, englannin kielen opetus

Contents

1 Introduction

This study discusses the representation of local cultures and local cultural identities by comparing the textbook series *Smart Moves* with English people's interviews. Ensuring the representativeness of cultures, stories and images is especially important in foreign language teaching and in foreign language textbooks. The geographical representativeness of cultural knowledge, in other words, to which extent different cultures of the world are discussed, creates a particular challenge for EFL textbook writers because of the large number of countries where English is spoken as a first or second language, let alone the countries where it is spoken as a foreign language. Nevertheless, lacking cultural knowledge on cities, towns and villages and their people means ignoring the local cultural diversity.

In her TED Talk *The danger of a single story* (2009), Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie suggests that there are multiple stories and realities of a culture. At the same time, she addresses the problem of one-sided or even misleading representations of people and cultures: "the single story creates stereotypes, and the problem with stereotypes is not that they are untrue, but that they are incomplete" (ibid.). Similarly, cultural theorist and sociologist Stuart Hall notes the following about the power of representation: "…we give things meaning by how we represent them – the words we use about them, the stories we tell about them, the ways we classify and conceptualize them, the values we place on them" (Hall 1997, 3). How cultures are depicted, therefore, is significant, be it, in the media, in literature or in educational publications.

According to Byram (1989, 135), instead of "catering for [pupils'] touristic curiosity" the aim of foreign language teaching is to develop their "social understanding of another culture" and "ethnocentric curiosity into an empathy with other culture and a different people" (ibid.). The interconnectedness of language and culture provides a particularly good opportunity for this, even if Byram, Esarte-Sarries and Taylor (1991, 8) remind us that other sources, such as parents and adults

in general, mass media, or, geography as a school subject, sometimes have a greater impact on pupils' perceptions of cultures than language teaching.

In foreign language education, despite the growing use of online learning materials, textbooks are still likely to continue as the most used materials, whether as paper copies or as digitalised versions. Thus, they remain an important source for gaining cultural knowledge in these classes. Even if adopting a pupil's view in the study conducted by Byram, Esarte-Sarries and Taylor (1991, 277) that "the function of the teacher is to supplement and enrich the information provided by the textbook", the textbook should still provide a good basis for this. As textbooks can also be seen as a potential source for the "single story", it is important to be aware of what kind of cultural information is being transferred.

Kramsch (1993, 206) insists on teaching more than the "national characteristics" of a culture, while Byram and Risager (1999, 145) note about language teachers' discourse being dominated by the "idea of a homogenous national language and the 'corresponding' homogenous national culture". Even if the second account above dates back to the end of 1990s and much has been achieved in terms of increasing awareness since, such an idea is, nevertheless, still likely to exist in the discourse to some extent. It is important to problematize this way of thinking, and, as noted by Byram and Risager (ibid.), to take a broader view that includes linguistic and cultural variation – not the least in textbook making, as this thesis will suggest.

In his criteria for textbook evaluation, Byram (1993) (cited in Cortazzi and Jin 1999, 203) lists social identity and social groups, including social class, regional identity and ethnic minorities. Similarly, among different aspects, Kramsch (1993, 206) mentions the "regional origin". Some earlier studies, such as the Durham study reported by Byram, Esarte-Sarries and Taylor (1991, 61–62) have demonstrated a lack in pupils' knowledge on regional differences and cultural diversity. In their analysis of French textbooks, Byram, Esarte-Sarries and Taylor (ibid.) question the representativeness of the books concentrating on the French capital Paris and Boulogne, a city

situated just across the Channel. Byram, Esarte-Sarries and Taylor (ibid.) see the selection as "unrepresentative, lacking the orientation towards balance and comprehensiveness".

A look at current EFL textbooks shows that textbook compilers are nowadays more concerned with geographical variation. The books include cultural knowledge of the United Kingdom and the USA, but also increasingly of Ireland, other European countries and Australia, Canada, New Zealand, India, South Africa and the Caribbean Isles. Despite the tendency to move away from what Kachru (1985) (cited in Mauranen 2009, 291) calls the "inner circle" and to concentrate more on other countries where the language is spoken, taking the awareness to regional and more local levels should be considered equally important. More attention should be paid to what is actually being said about countries, including the inner circle countries, and both their larger and smaller regions.

In the present study, in the case of Great Britain, the notion *regional* as opposed to *national* is understood not only to refer to larger regions, such as England, Scotland and Wales, but more importantly to smaller areas, such as counties and local communities; cities, towns and villages. Acknowledging that England, Scotland and Wales as nations all have their special cultural traits, we should be equally aware of local cultures, in order to avoid spreading stereotypical images. For example, if we take a closer look at the geographical representation of England in English textbooks used in Finnish schools, we notice that smaller regions and local communities tend to be unspecified. Alternatively, the focus seems to be almost solely on the capital city and its sights and landmarks. Thus, the view supported by these books is somewhat London-centred and touristic, even if, compared to Scotland and Wales, England is perhaps discussed more in the books.

As Kane (1991, 247) states, the "patterns of everyday behaviour may differ by region or by class". According to Neuner (1997, 75) "the people and their daily life", which Neuner (ibid.) also refers to as "aspects of universal sociocultural experience of the self and of the peer group", build the core of sociocultural learning at the elementary level. Together with "imagined encounters with

foreign language use in ‘everyday situations’ (comprehension/communication)” and “one’s own point of view when looking at the foreign world ‘from outside’”, it can be seen as sociocultural content that according to Neuner (ibid.) “provides for identification, emotional engagement and human interest and helps to develop ‘inner experience’”. In Finland, the basic level also comprises secondary school. Basing my decision on the fundamental nature of sociocultural knowledge at this level of foreign language education, I chose to analyse the secondary level English textbook series *Smart Moves*. Another reason for my choice was the fact that in Finland secondary school English classes are the last that are mandatory to all pupils. Having used this textbook series in my teaching myself, it was also the most familiar one to me.

As for choosing sociocultural content for teaching, it is good to be aware of what Kane (1991, 247) points out as “the significance of the relationships between individual biographies and everyday patterns of behaviour”. This study suggests that one possible way to deliver cultural images, which could be seen as being more “real”, is to collect descriptions and experiences of the everyday from representatives of the culture(s) in question. To illustrate this, alongside with the contemporary English textbook series *Smart Moves*, the empirical part of the thesis will include an analysis of examples from interviews with English people originating from different English counties, cities, towns and villages. Taking the importance of providing local sociocultural information as its starting point, this study aims to answer the following question:

- How does the representation of English local cultures and ways of living in the textbook series *Smart Moves* differ from how English people themselves describe them, and in which ways are they similar?

More specifically the study will seek to answer the following questions:

- To what extent does this textbook series, used in Finnish secondary schools, include different smaller English regions, such as counties, cities, towns and villages, and their inhabitants, and how are they depicted in the books?

- How does a sample of English people describe local cultures and ways of living in their (former) home regions?

My motivation for this topic rises primarily from my own experience of the English culture and conversations with English people. Having learnt many things I had never seen in textbooks, I started to wonder why this was**.** Understandably, there cannot be a single set of topics included in all EFL textbooks, and the selection of topics is always subjective. Nevertheless, my concern remains whether the current foreign language textbooks can offer a representative range of stories and images also at a micro-level, concerning local cultures, in order to deliver a varied view of a country and its people. This study will hopefully give an insight into local cultural variation, which, as suggested here, could be covered more in textbooks and other language learning resources by including local people's experiences for both their cultural and motivational value.

In the following chapter, I will discuss the relationship of language and culture as well as the notion of cultural awareness, followed by a discussion of sociocultural content and competence in foreign language teaching. After this, I will move onto presenting what the guidelines for foreign language education set by the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages and the Finnish National Curriculum say about them. To conclude the chapter, I will discuss cultural content in textbooks and authenticity. Chapter 3 concentrates on the notion of cultural identity in general terms as well as at a more local level, taking the English local cultures and cultural identities as an example. The fourth chapter of the thesis is reserved for the empirical study. It includes a description of the materials and method used as well as the presentation of the results. The results will be discussed further in chapter 5 before the final and concluding chapter of the thesis.

2 Language and culture in foreign language teaching

This chapter will start with the concept of culture and the relationship of language and culture in relation to foreign language teaching and learning. Section 2.2 discusses sociocultural content and competence in foreign language learning, and in section 2.3 I will present what the official guidelines, such as the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages and the Finnish National Curriculum say about them. This chapter will end with a discussion of some earlier studies on cultural content in textbooks and the authenticity of the contents.

2.1 On the relationship of language and culture

The concept of culture has multiple definitions, as culture has been perceived differently by various people and depending on the field of study. It is impossible to give a single definition, which would rule out all others. However, Brøgger (1992, 31) lists the ways in which anthropologists have described culture, for example, as the actual behaviour and empirically observable features, such as habits and customs or people's view of the world and "the ideas and values shared by the members of a society or a social group" (ibid.). The two definitions should not be seen as contradictory but complementary. The first one depicts culture at a more surface level, whereas the latter definition is significantly more abstract, referring to aspects that are more difficult to detect. The set of questions which the present empirical study is based on included both questions on everyday habits, customs and traditions as well as ideas and values, thus combining the two levels. In addition, Brøgger (ibid.) mentions material artefacts or products, which, however, will be discussed in this study only to some extent.

The idea of the inseparable nature of language and culture is not particularly new. According to Hinkel (1999, 2), for example, in the 1920's, Edward Sapir stated that it was not possible to study the language and culture of a people separately. One way to approach the relationship of language

and culture is the confluence of different fields of study. For example, in cultural studies, many other fields overlap, including, that of anthropology and the study of foreign languages (Brøgger 1992, 39). Therefore, Brøgger (1992, 40) has defined cultural studies as "…a synthesis of cultural and linguistic analyses of written sources". The sources range from oral interviews to diaries and newspaper reports and advertisements, only to mention a few listed by Brøgger (ibid). The materials analysed for the present study also include oral interviews, following in this respect the tradition of cultural studies.

There has been considerable consensus on the importance of culture in the field of language education in the last two decades. For example, Kramsch (1993, 12–13) noted that cultural teaching should not be seen as a separate fifth area added to the "traditional four skills", by which she meant listening, reading, writing and speaking. Byram and Risager (1999, 146) illustrated the relationship of culture and language by differentiating between reasons for teaching culture together with language. They started by considering the pragmatic and semantic side of culture: it is necessary to have background knowledge of words and expressions, and their usage (ibid.). In a similar way, Brøgger (1992, 32) linked the cultural and linguistic knowledge by saying that being proficient in a language means being familiar with the "assumptions encoded in ordinary discourse". The second and third arguments Byram and Risager (1999, 146) connected with communicative competence: to be able to "engage with native speakers in their own context" and to see culture as a "macro-context for language use", as well as to become aware of native speakers' own views on their culture and what they find important in it. As Kramsch (1993, 181) pointed out, the aim of learning about a culture is not to copy the behaviour of native speakers, but to raise cultural awareness, trying to understand differences and developing a positive attitude towards it. This thesis aims to suggest that, in order to understand the target culture(s) and people better, and to communicate successfully, it is necessary to be familiar with local cultural variation and people's everyday life.

The idea in Michael Byram's *A Model of Foreign Language Education* (Byram 2009, 247–258, see also Byram 1989, 136–148) is to facilitate the application of cultural knowledge into language learning by explaining the interconnectedness of its four components: language learning, language awareness, cultural awareness and cultural experience (the direct contact with the target culture). Byram (2009, 251) sees that language learning and cultural awareness are connected by language awareness. By language awareness he means, for example, an awareness of "different degrees of formality and the appropriate linguistic formulae" (ibid.). According to him, the awareness of the degrees of formality is "linked with cultural knowledge of social structures" (ibid.), whereas "linguistic formulae are the surface indicators of native speakers' cultural knowledge, which is itself largely unconscious and difficult to articulate" (ibid.). The Byram model links language awareness and cultural awareness with both language learning and the "general understanding of the nature of culture", as they support the former and extend the latter (Byram 2009, 252). However, when discussing cultural awareness, Byram also highlights the awareness of the "non-linguistic dimensions of culture" (ibid.) and the "change from monocultural to intercultural competence" (ibid.). In a way, this comes close to the idea of the two-way expansion of understanding culture, which means becoming aware of one's own mother tongue and culture at the same time as learning about a foreign culture (Kaikkonen 2000, 52). In the most ideal case cultural awareness is raised by "cultural experience", the fourth component in Byram's (2009, 255) model.

The notion of *target culture*, as widely as it is still used, has been viewed critically in the more recent discussion together with *national culture* (see, for example Liddicoat and Scarino, 2013; Risager, 2007). Liddicoat and Scarino (2013, 18) argue that the notion of national culture puts too strong an emphasis on the location of culture, instead of considering what culture is. They claim that such a way of understanding culture follows the ideas of "political geography" (ibid.). Kramsch (2006, 12) and Risager (2007, 163) speak of two different traditions in the field of language and

culture studies, or in "culture pedagogy" (Risager, ibid.): *modernism* and *post-modernism.* Risager (2007, 164) states that textbooks seem to maintain the modernist style, viewed by Liddicoat and Scarino (2013, 18) as "cultural notes that present images of recognized cultural attributes of nations as cultural content". According to Kramsch (2006, 11–12), the idea of a national language and culture dates back to the 19th century. Mauranen (2009, 296) connects this more precisely with the end of the 18th century European ideal of nationalism, and she adds that the idea of learning about languages and cultures in order to be able to understand native speakers better is still reflected in the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages.

Kramsch (2006, 11–12) notes, however, that the concept of culture has become more politicized, which, according to her, shows as ethnic, religious and moral considerations regarding what to teach as culture. The newer post-modernist approach becomes particularly clear in English language teaching today (Kramsch 2006, 16). This can be illustrated by the way Mauranen (2009, 290–298) discusses the ownership of English as a lingua franca: whether English cannot be considered to have a home culture anymore but, instead, many different local varieties, and whether discourse communities for different purposes have come to replace national cultures, traditionally connected with languages.

Both Kramsch (2006, 11) and Risager (2007, 152–153) problematize what Risager calls a "national paradigm", and which means identifying the national language with the national culture. Risager (2007, 153) goes as far as attempting, in her own words, to "neutralise the language / culture dualism". As a result, she suggests that in texts and other media, the focus on cultural and social conditions should be removed (Risager 2007, 154). However, in a slightly more tentative tone, Risager (2007, 155) adds that first-language contexts should still be included in teaching, but that the context and content selection should be guided by learners' experience and interests. Thus, without giving up the content side of cultural learning altogether, Risager (2007, 164) describes the postmodernist view as one that concentrates on learning processes and strategies as well as pupils'

experiences, attitudes and emotions. The learner's perspective is equally supported by Liddicoat and Scarino (2013, 19), who criticize area studies on what they call an external and observational role of the learner in cultural learning: where the learner acquires knowledge on history, geography and institutions, and where "…language is used primarily for naming events, institutions, people and places" (ibid.). Regarding the context, for Risager (2007, 159) the main interest in context lies in a "language that can potentially be used throughout the world and in all cultural contexts". To what extent this is a realistic idea, remains to discuss, but the shift from national to *transnational* highlighted by Risager (2007, 164) has certainly been notable in the most recent discourse on the relationship of language and culture.

2.2 Sociocultural content and competence in foreign language learning

According to Byram and Risager (1999, 3), the cultural dimension in foreign language teaching and learning means communicative competence that enables a foreign language speaker to understand language use in specific sociocultural contexts and "cultural knowledge and pre-suppositions of specific groups of native-speakers" (ibid.). Furthermore, they say that it gives the foreign language learner a chance to reflect upon his or her own culture, its appearance in the eyes of an outsider, and how it might be linked to other cultures, whether those of native speakers or those of *lingua franca speakers*, and how communication can be facilitated (ibid.). As the third aspect Byram and Risager (1999, 4) see the teacher's role as a mediator between the cultures of their learners and those of others, both helping their learners to become such mediators themselves and increasing their general interest in cultures. Therefore, it can be rightly suggested that the particular challenge of language education lies in providing learners with enough possibilities for gaining as varied cultural information as possible, meaning not only pointing out stereotypes, but also explaining the sociocultural background. As Neuner (1997, 66) puts it:

> It is essential that in foreign language learning the learner receives information about the people of the target country, about the way

> they organise their daily lives (routines and rituals), about their ideas, attitudes and beliefs etc.., because this will help the learner to reflect upon his own position (similarities or differences) and come to terms with possible communication "traps" in the foreign language (misunderstandings, blockades; etc.) (ibid.)

In other words, Neuner points out the pragmatic importance of sociocultural learning and links cultural awareness with linguistic awareness (see also 2.1 for a discussion of Byram's model). Furthermore, as Neuner states above, being able to understand sociocultural knowledge and to reflect upon similarities and differences enhances communication.

In a research study where Castro and Sercu (2005, 27) interviewed foreign language teachers on their views on the aims of foreign language teaching, they reported that to "provide information about daily life and routines" came right after the need to "develop attitudes of openness and tolerance towards other peoples and cultures". This implies that providing information on the daily life can also be seen as a key to a better understanding of other people and their cultures. The third and fourth objectives chosen by the teachers were to "promote reflection on cultural differences" and to "provide information about shared values and beliefs" (ibid.), thus, something that can also result from discussions on the organisation of the everyday life.

The amount of sociocultural content available for foreign language teaching is immense, thus, as Neuner (1997, 66) points out, the selection is always subjective. Nevertheless, Neuner offers three possible sets of criteria for selecting the contents: the "subject-matter-oriented criteria", the criteria of "teachability/learnability of sociocultural phenomena" and "the learner-oriented criteria" (Neuner 1997, 78). According to Neuner (ibid.), in the subject-matter-oriented criteria, the focus is on information which is "systematic" in its way of discussing, for example, life, institutions and cultural achievements, "complete" in its encyclopaedic nature or contains "full details of one aspect", as well as being "representative", thus, "characteristic/typical" of the target culture (ibid.). Based on his own experiences, Neuner (1997, 79) suggests that the subject-matter criteria should only be applied to the extent as necessary and the focus should be on the two other types of criteria.

It is easy to agree on this view, as this type of information tends to be generic in its nature and can remain somewhat superficial.

Another category of criteria, that of teachability / learnability considers the possible ways of representing phenomena in the classroom via "objects; pictures; actions; simple explanations" and also the integration of the phenomena or combining them with linguistic aspects and the "affinity between sociocultural and linguistic phenomena" (Neuner 1997, 78). The teachability aspect could possibly restrict some teachers more than others, as teaching sociocultural content can demand for extra work. Moreover, choosing the topics can be challenging, as what interests one pupil, does not necessarily interest all.

Perhaps the most discussed criteria in the field of language education today are what Neuner calls the learner-oriented criteria, where the focus is on the learner and his "interests" and "needs", including, for example, "how 'they' are (day-to-day life)" and "what is different from my own world (contrastive/comparative aspects)" (ibid.). While these aspects clearly have their place in the criteria, it is important to note that in modern foreign language teaching the focus should not solely be on "them" and what is "different" or "foreign". In fact, strong polarisation might come close to something that is known as "othering", by producing stereotypes instead of increasing tolerance and understanding. Therefore, even if it is a natural part of identification to differentiate between the members and non-members of a group, it is important to remember that forgetting about similarities gives an unreal image of the target culture. Furthermore, similarities and a chance to identify with something often make the contents interesting for learners and increase their motivation for learning. Among the learner-oriented criteria, Neuner (ibid.) mentions the "specific interests of groups or individuals (e.g. in sports; politics; hobbies)", which could also work as a point of identification and as a reflection of learner's interests. Similarly, "what my fantasies are about the foreign world" (ibid.), can be seen as a starting point for building on the earlier positive or negative preconceptions of the learner, as pupils tend to have earlier knowledge on cultural topics.

The learner-oriented criteria also comprise a learner's needs: "what I need to get along with "them" / when I am there" (ibid.), which would seem to point towards intercultural skills. To help the learner to understand cultures and people better, however, all focus should not be on pointing out differences and similarities by grouping, but equally on transmitting the experience of an individual and avoiding too far stretching generalisations. Furthermore, this study suggests that the use of real accounts and experiences could create a more authentic feeling (see, however, the discussion of authenticity in section 2.4). Additionally, Neuner (ibid.) mentions that a learner needs "professional/vocational knowledge".

The aim of integrating sociocultural content into foreign language teaching is that, eventually, the learners will acquire sociocultural competence, which has been defined as follows:

> …[to] be able to interpret and bring different cultural systems into relation with one another, to interpret socially distinctive variations with a foreign cultural system, and to manage the dysfunctions and resistances peculiar to intercultural communication…." (Byram and Zarate 1997, 13)

Here Byram and Zarate (1997, 13–22) distinguish between different types of competence, *savoirs*: "savoir-être", "savoir-apprendre", "savoir-faire" and "savoirs", or, "attitudes and values", "the ability to learn", "skills/knowing how" and "knowledge/knowing that". Byram and Zarate (1997, 13) suggest especially that the "knowledge/knowing that" is what should be aimed at in general education. It remains unclear whether "general education" here corresponds to both the secondary school and the upper secondary school levels or only the latter. Nevertheless, when looking at the objectives in the other categories of competence, it becomes clear that at least for the secondary school level many of them are too advanced. Therefore, it is perhaps sufficient to mention first only some other objectives that would seem manageable at the secondary school level, the target level in the present study, and to concentrate then on the category of "knowledge/knowing that".

Starting with "attitudes and values", it is easy to share the view that foreign language education should aim at increasing "attitudes of openness towards and interest in foreign people,

societies and cultures" (Byram and Zarate 1997, 14), which was also seen as the most important objective by foreign language teachers, as discussed earlier in section 2.1. Byram and Zarate's (1997, 16) list of objectives for "the ability to learn" include many practical aims that secondary school pupils should be able to understand fairly easily, for example, "the ability to manage spatio-temporal constraints (arriving punctually in an unknown place)". The implied concepts of politeness and consideration are probably the easiest ones to start with when discussing intercultural communication. As today's foreign language teaching tends to emphasize self-directedness more and more, pupils cannot be encouraged enough to increase their "knowing-how", comprising, for example, their "capacity to use the different sources of information about the foreign context available in the learner's country" (Byram and Zarate 1997, 20). As will be suggested later in this study, information search on the target culture(s) could be easily integrated into foreign language learning as a way of gaining sociocultural knowledge.

Knowledge or 'savoirs' can be defined as

> …a system of cultural references, which structures the implicit and explicit knowledge acquired in the course of linguistic and cultural learning, and which takes into account the specific needs of the learner in his/her interaction with speakers of the foreign language. (Byram and Zarate 1997, 18)

Concerning knowledge, Byram and Zarate (1997, 18) list different types of references, of which perhaps the following are the most relevant for the present study: "references connected with national and, more generally, cultural identity", "references associated with space" and "references associated with the operation of institutions". The first category includes the "national and regional memory of the community being studied (emblems, sites of significance to the collective memory, landmarks referring to historical events, national auto- and hetero-stereotypes)" (ibid.) as well as "the historical conditions of the development of value systems; the evolution of the locations of processes of socialization of family values, of gender roles, of taboos…." (ibid). The references associated with space imply

> …the national area of the culture being studied: different descriptive categories in use (historical regions, different administrative divisions, etc.), geographical landmarks used by the community in the perception of its living space; regional socio-linguistic variations; markers distinguishing between public and private spaces, markers denoting the relationship between body and space….(ibid.)

Similarly, even if here in relation to social structures, the local and regional dimensions are also mentioned in the "references associated with the operation of institutions in their day-to-day influence (relationship individual/State, individual/local, regional and national social structures)" Byram and Zarate 1997, 19). Needless to say that the "references associated with social diversity" (Byram and Zarate 1997, 18), that is, the "significance and traditions of minorities in the national community, the national factors in social change, criteria for the identification of the various social classes" (ibid.) should not have any less attention. The following section will discuss how the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages and the Finnish National Core Curriculum see local variation and sociocultural content in foreign language teaching and learning.

2.3 CEFR and the National Curriculum

At the national level, the *Finnish National Core Curriculum* designed by Opetushallitus, the Finnish National Board of Education, has set guidelines for language teaching in Finnish schools. Separate curricula have been assigned for basic education, for learners aged 7–16, and general upper secondary education, for learners aged 16–19, as well as vocational upper secondary education. The most recent curriculum concerning the secondary level is the *Finnish National Core Curriculum for Basic Education 2004* (Opetushallitus 2004, hereafter referred to as National Core Curriculum and OPH 2004). The next *National Core Curriculum* for basic education is due in 2016.

In the *National Core Curriculum* (OPH 2004) the aims for learners aged 13–16, classes 7–9 in learning English as a foreign language have been divided into language skills, culture skills and learning strategies (OPH 2004, 141). The culture skills which are stated in the curriculum include getting to know the target culture and comparing this knowledge with one's own culture (ibid.).

Furthermore, the curriculum states that the learner should be able to understand that values are based on cultures (ibid.). As the aims for the earlier age group (9–12) already include basic similarities and differences between cultures (OPH 2004, 140), local varieties could be discussed in the last three years of basic education in more detail.

On the language skills the guidelines say that the texts used should have a clear structure (OPH 2004, 141), which might, in fact, make it more difficult to use authentic examples. On the other hand, however, they also state that the learner should be able to produce spoken and written everyday descriptions that are more detailed (OPH 2004, 141), which seems to support the idea of discussing the daily life in different cultures as well as using selected extracts from interviews.

The learning strategies mention project skills and information search skills (ibid.), which go well with learning about local cultures. In addition to the topics for the earlier age group, such as living in towns and in the countryside (OPH 2004, 139), the secondary school contents include leisure time and hobbies, travelling, public services, working and studying, sustainable development, healthcare and wellness and media (OPH 2004, 141). All these categories allow discussion of local variation. In addition, knowledge about the life form and history of the language area (OPH 2004, 142) are mentioned as culture strategies.

By following the guidelines of the *National Curriculum* discussed above, it would seem possible to reach what is stated in the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages* (Council of Europe 2001, hereafter referred to as CEFR and COE 2001) as an aim of foreign language education: “to achieve a wider and deeper understanding of the way of life and forms of thought of other peoples and of their cultural heritage” (COE 2001, 3). As suggested in this study, letting native informants talk about their own cultures could be a way to support this. Furthermore, the *CEFR* demonstrates a link between intercultural awareness and awareness of regional and local cultures by stating the following:

> Knowledge, awareness and understanding of the relation (similarities and distinctive differences) between the ‘world of origin’ and the

> ‘world of the target community’ produce an intercultural awareness. It is, of course, important to note that intercultural awareness includes an awareness of regional and social diversity in both worlds. It is also enriched by awareness of a wider range of cultures than those carried by the learner’s L1 and L2. (COE 2001, 103.)

In a way similar to that of the *National Curriculum*, the *CEFR* sees making comparisons between the learner’s own culture and the target culture important. While the *National Curriculum* highlights the importance of information on the daily life, which also allows the discussion of local variation, the *CEFR*, in turn, speaks explicitly about the importance of discussing the “regional and social diversity” in these cultures. In other words, together these official documents, which are often seen as the most important guidelines for our foreign language teaching in Finland, suggest that it is important that pupils learn about similarities and differences in the everyday life also at the level of regional and local cultures.

2.4 Cultural content and authenticity in textbooks

In Davcheva and Sercu’s (2005, 95) study, foreign language teachers from different countries were asked to put eleven different criteria for textbook selection into an order of importance. As a result, the amount of cultural information was ranked fifth by the teachers, right after correspondence to the level and age of pupils, motivational aspect, supplementary materials and curricular requirements (ibid.). In the Durham study (Byram, Esarte-Sarries and Taylor 1991, 87), when English pupils studying French were asked about the role of the textbook, they hoped for more information on early life, school, sport, houses, geography, history, the arts and people. In other words, the pupils signalled an interest in sociocultural information that could, for the most part, be characterised as information on the everyday.

In her analysis of the characteristics of the early textbooks since 1950s to late 1970s onwards and until the beginning of 1990s, Risager (1991, 184) observes, however, a new preference for replacing native speakers with tourists and visitors as the main characters of the books, which,

according to her, has led to the everyday experience being partly lost. Practical touristic communication situations mentioned by Risager (ibid.) are not likely to lose their importance, as these are situations that most of the pupils will encounter first. Nevertheless, it remains to argue whether it would be more important to include in-depth information on the society and its people and their everyday life in textbooks, the type of information that is less likely to be found in tourist guides, but which can affect the way the people feel about discussing about certain topics.

When examining textbooks, Risager (ibid.) found a dominance of urban centres. This seems to be a continuing tendency in the current textbooks as well, as depictions of the countryside are relatively rare. Risager's observation that the "life in urban centres" is "not any longer to be identified with the capital" (ibid.) is unfortunately only partly true, and as discussed in the present study, the realities of the capital city and the rest of the country can be very different.

As already stated, what makes writing English textbooks particularly challenging is the great number of target countries and cultures. Risager (1991, 184–186) reports on a "geographical spread concerning the choice of towns and – to a lesser extent – countries", and she notices an increase in the amount of geographical information provided on different towns but points out that "…only some names are given, and there is practically no information on cultural geography" (Risager 1991, 186). According to her, there is also a richness of lifestyles and occupations that should be taken into consideration (ibid.). Furthermore, especially in the case of the British society, it should be added that in addition to local cultures, there are many subcultures and the still prevailing class distinction, the latter of which is also discussed by Kane (1991, 245). All in all, the textbooks should aim at representativeness and balance. As Risager (1991, 191) puts it: "one may say that [textbooks] should present the country in a nut-shell".

As for textbook characters, Risager (1991, 186) describes them as having only little variation in their emotions and expressing seldom their attitudes, values or personal opinions – in other words, the crucial components of one's identity. Letting informants talk about various subjects

could be one solution to this, although there are many factors that can affect their responses in an interview situation and hinder them from discussing the subject at a more personal level (see below and also 4.1.2). Risager (ibid.) sees interviews as "rather impersonal situations".

Kane (1991, 245) suggests that textbooks could benefit from the ethnographic approach, as a detailed presentation, characteristic of ethnography, might prevent from an oversimplification of cultural themes. At the same time, he reminds us, however, that restricting the number of topics too much and only concentrating on a few subjects might again lead to producing new stereotypes (ibid.). Risager (2007, 146) comments on the benefits of ethnography by suggesting that "…ethnographic studies must by nature have a local focus that can counterbalance any eventual national stereotypes".

The discussion of the cultural content in textbooks intertwines with authenticity and authentic materials in language teaching and learning. Feng and Byram (2002, 58–59) say that because of an increasing curiosity towards the communicative approach to language teaching, there is also a growing interest in using authentic materials in textbooks, which in turn has had a positive effect on both learner motivation as well as communicative competence.

Kane (1991, 245) suggests that inauthentic materials and the inaccurate representation of a culture can be caused by a prevailing "wish to preserve certain cultural images (heterostereotypes) of the foreign country", including, for example, the "eccentrity and oddness of British culture, but also certain class-based beliefs and practices (the gentleman, public schools, the 'establishment')". On the other hand, he writes about an interaction between heterostereotypes and autostereotypes, self-images produced by the culture itself, which might also not correspond to the reality (ibid.). As for autostereotypes, this is a good point to return to the suggestion of the present study (see Introduction) that using native informants as a source for textbook contents might result in a more accurate and realistic picture of the target culture. Such a suggestion should be made with caution, as it is easy to agree with Durant (1997, 24) when he points out that as opposed to the depth of

experience often found in the accounts of native informants, the uniqueness of the experience might challenge its representativeness. In addition, Durant (ibid.) makes an interesting comment by stating that special attention should be paid to critically evaluating the experiences of expatriates, as these might be "distant, inflected by nostalgia, or consist of unusually idiosyncratic views or positions" (ibid.).

It is important to note that while in the use of the term 'inauthentic' presented above authenticity mainly refers to inaccuracy in terms of cultural images, another related and perhaps a more discussed side of authenticity is that of authentic language use. The terminological problem is also acknowledged by Kramsch (1993, 177), who differentiates between something that is 'real' and "the way language is used in non-pedagogic, natural communication", in contrast to "artificial language of textbooks and instructional dialogue". As for authentic texts, Kaikkonen (2000, 57) gives the following examples: newspapers, information material, requested texts, films and videos, correspondence and literary texts.

Breen (2009, 176), in turn, questions the possibility of giving a single definition of *authentic* by listing four different aspects of authenticity, including the authenticity of texts, the authenticity of learner's interpretation of the texts, the authenticity of tasks and the authenticity in classroom situations. Widdowson (2009, 155) goes further by denying the existence of authentic language data altogether. According to him, it is the way genuine material is being used and the awareness of the pupils of conventions, which realise the authenticity of material which has authentic potential (ibid.). The main criterion for the authenticity of a text stated by Widdowson (2009, 149) is whether the text allows an authentic response from its reader. According to Kaikkonen (2000, 57), the real experience of authenticity depends on the way authentic texts are discussed and how successful the process of making them meaningful is. Similarly, Breen (2009, 178) highlights the link between the authenticity of a text and its interpretation. Furthermore, Kaikkonen (2000, 57) gives an example of pupils who found self-produced texts and those written by pupils from partner schools

more authentic than newspaper texts integrated into textbooks. This implies that when a pupil' own contribution to a text is high, the text is possibly experienced as being more real.

One way to make a text more meaningful to a pupil could be to include texts which compare and contrast the pupil' own culture with target cultures, even if Risager (1991, 187) reports on the difficulty in including a contrastive analysis of these two cultures in textbooks because of their international market. However, this does not apply to the Finnish school context to a great extent, as the bilingual textbooks used in Finnish schools are almost solely planned for a national use. In general, there seems to be a tendency to discuss the pupils' own cultures perhaps more in the current textbooks, as observed also by Risager (ibid.). This could be a sign of a growing understanding of the importance of pupils' ability to talk about their own cultures in a foreign language as well as to make comparisons between cultures and, eventually, to build up their own cultural identities.

3 Cultural identification and local cultures

This chapter aims to explain the different layers of cultural identification, including the regional and local levels. After this, the second section in this chapter, section 3.2 discusses the notions of *regional* and *local culture*, followed by a discussion of what previous studies have shown about English local cultures and identities.

3.1 Cultural identity

Brøgger (1992, 38) highlights the everyday and active nature of culture by stating that culture is to be conceived as "the collectively shared strategies by which people deal with their everyday situations and make sense of their existence". While the first part of this definition would seem to put already too strong an emphasis on the collective, the latter part (making sense of their existence)

shows a more personal dimension of culture. Both of these dimensions, the personal and the collective side of culture and cultural identity, are of interest to the present study.

According to Hall (1996, 1) there has been a considerable amount of criticism towards the concept of *identity*. The definitions of identity or *social* or *group identity* can be derived from *identification*, which Hall (1996, 2) defines as being based on a "recognition of some common origin or shared characteristics with another person or a group, or with an ideal", and Hall (ibid.) continues that solidarity and allegiance are natural results of this. When defining the concept of cultural identity, Kramsch (2000, 66) says that there is a common belief in a natural connection existing between a social group, the language spoken by the group members and the group identity. As Kramsch (2000, 65) states, accent, vocabulary and discourse patterns are means of identifying oneself and being identified as members of a speech or discourse community, adding that this group membership is a source for personal strength and pride as well as a sense of social importance and historical continuity. As we will later see, however, this might not always be the case. For one reason or another, a person might not want to identify him- or herself with the local community. Furthermore, as Kramsch (ibid.) points out, the linguistic and cultural boundaries of groups and communities, and thus the group memberships, are not clear cut. This is especially evident because of the relatively open nature of today's societies, and multiple collective identities, such as national, regional as well as other group identities, and their changing and possibly conflicting natures (ibid. and Kramsch 2000, 66).

According to Kramsch (2000, 83), cultural identities are formed by relationships, family, school, workplace, professional organisation, church and their power hierarchies, expected roles and statuses, values and beliefs, attitudes and ideologies. Brøgger (1992, 39) reports on "variations in culture patterns among social groups according to region, class, ethnicity, religion, race, gender…", of which the notion of region is especially relevant for the present study as it focuses on geographical identities and local cultures. Thus, the 'social group' in the present study is made up of

members of a local community. At the same time, the above definition of a social group shows that region is only one of the aspects forming a person's cultural identity. Kramsch (2000, 68) says that family biography is a particularly important component in a person's cultural identity. As also shown in the results of the present study to some extent, this influence could sometimes be stronger than the link to local and regional cultures. Furthermore, as Sihvola (2000, 62) points out, sometimes a person's identification can be stronger with the place itself, the familiar surroundings, landscapes or buildings, than with the people.

Taking the cultural identification as an example for his model, Kaikkonen (2004, 84) has created a so-called *nest identity*, which is a process consisting of several identification sectors linked to each other and forming a path of cultural identification. The local cultural identity appears to be closely related to the experience of 'I', as in Kaikkonen's model (2004, 84) the identification path begins within the closest societies, including family, and it works its way through the home region and county ending up at the international sector. Kaikkonen (2004, 83) sees that local cultures exist, even if their meaning is sometimes questioned through the integration process in Europe. However, it should be kept in mind that the intensity of the experience of the different layers of the identification path can vary. Therefore, it might be that some people feel a stronger connection to their local region, whereas others might define themselves as primarily European or, for example, British.

In the second episode of BBC Two's documentary *Fry's Planet Word* (2011), Stephen Fry discusses English local identities and suggests that "our attachment to our language is about emotion, not intellect" and "our identity is all about feelings". As Fry (2011) acknowledges in the following example, the question of cultural identity is a personal one and the level of attachment can vary from person to person:

> Those who say well it doesn't matter to me that I'm British, it doesn't matter to me that I'm English. It doesn't matter to me that I'm from Shropshire, Yorkshire, Kent or Norfolk. I can't feel like that. I have this, I can't help but belong.

Kramsch (2000, 83) notes that geographic mobility and professional change can have a remarkable impact on a person's social identity. Furthermore, as Kramsch (2000, 77) reminds us, it is possible to have a multicultural identity and a number of social roles, or what she calls subject positions, which can vary depending on the interactional context. Similarly, according to the discursive approach referred to by Hall (1996, 2), rather than being stable, identification is an ongoing process. Hall (1996, 4) also refers to its fragmented nature and multiple construction, and the two-way relationship with *representation* by stating that the way we are represented can also affect the way we represent ourselves.

Kramsch (2000, 83) highlights the role of communication and contact with other people by saying that "cultural identities are seen as being formed in open dialogue with others". Wan et al. seem to agree:

> Cultural identity is not chosen solely by the individual or dictated by the people around the individual. Rather, achieving positive attachment to a culture and maintaining one's individuality is a negotiated process among the person, the shared representations in that person's culture, and the representations held by that person's social others. In other words, cultural identity is a product of negotiation. It is a personal choice, yet it is limited by the culture and social contexts to which one is exposed. (Wan et al. 2011, 123.)

According to Pietikäinen and Mäntynen (2009, 63), discourse can be seen as identity builders that link the way we perceive ourselves, the others and the relationships between people. As stated by Wan et al. (ibid.), identities are negotiated. The way we see ourselves is also formed by the way the others speak about us and by the way we speak about ourselves (Pietikäinen and Mäntynen 2009, 64). Therefore, it can be expected that when interviewing a person from a specific culture, as in the present study, the interviewee is likely to reproduce his or her own personal meanings and as well as meanings on local cultures shared by the community. Finally, it should be noted that if we search for collective identities and ideas and thoughts that are shared by a local community, we run the risk of creating stereotypes, because, as Lehtonen (1997, 26) points out, the idea that a group of people shares some qualities is also characteristic of stereotypes.

3.2 Local cultures and identities in England

When discussing local and regional identities and belongingness, it is important not only to understand the multi-layered nature of cultural identification, but also that of the notions 'region' and 'local culture'. Sometimes what is meant by the regions of Britain are, in fact, the nations of England, Scotland and Wales. However, what is perhaps much more common is sharing Oakland's (2002, 10) view of seeing regions as sub-units to nations. Larger political and geographical areas are at one level of geographical identities of the British people and they are followed by regions (ibid.). Similarly, Leuerer (2007, 36) understands regions as "territorial units of a nation-state", that is, smaller than nations, but at the same time larger than a county, which he mentions as an example of a "smaller sub-regional unit". Bryant (2006, 209–235) lists the following as the official regions of England: East of England, East Midlands, London, North-East, North-West, South-East, South-West and Yorkshire & The Humber.

The definition of *region* in the Cambridge Advanced Learner's Dictionary (hereafter referred to as the CAD, Cambridge University Press 2015) is that it is a "particular area or part of the world, or any of the large official areas into which a country is divided". The words 'particular' and 'official' in the CAD definition imply that a region should be a relatively restricted area with relatively clear borders. However, the following examples that are given by CAD show regions whose borders would seem less definite: "the semi-desert regions of Australia" and "the Birmingham region". As illustrated by both of these examples, what is seen as a 'region' can vary. In the first example, the way of defining a region seems to have a physical geographical focus and to refer to a less restricted area. "Semi-desert regions" could describe several areas inside a country, even if the second part of the definition restricts the area to a specific country ("of Australia"). The second example, in turn, shows that 'region' is often taken to refer to an area around a particular city ("the Birmingham region"), in which case, much space is left for interpretation on where its borders lie.

Furthermore, Leuerer (2007, 37) distinguishes between "cultural regions" or "patterns of identity, based on cultural protagonists", administrative units, such as federal states or regional governments and the functional dimension, which emphasises "economic or social criteria". It is important to acknowledge that these different perspectives are likely to intertwine and that the notions of 'region' and 'local' can hardly be totally dissociated from their more political connotations. However, of the different points of view presented by Leuerer, the one closest to the perspective in the present study is that of cultural regions and patterns of identity, which might not follow the official region, county and city borders.

According to Featherstone (1993, 175), *local culture* is often defined as "…the culture of a relatively small bounded space in which the individuals who live there engage in daily, face-to-face relationships". Featherstone (1993, 176) describes the shared knowledge as relatively fixed and time-persisting**,** something that refers to inhabitants and their physical environment but may also consist of "rituals, symbols and ceremonies that link people to a place and a common sense of the past". Commemorative practices on annual celebrations, such as Christmas and New Year, or weddings and funerals or participation or involved spectatorship at local, regional and national rituals may make the bond stronger (Featherstone 1993, 177). Featherstone (1993, 176) sees the "sense of belonging, the common sedimented experiences and cultural forms which are associated with a place" essential to a local culture. In turn, a description of belongingness such as this shows the close relationship of local culture and local identity. In addition, Featherstone (ibid.) points out that the concept of 'local culture' is relational, however. He illustrates this by his example of a "temporary sense of common identity" between two Europeans in Asia, two Englishmen in France or two Northern Englishmen coming from neighbouring but normally rival towns, and living in London (ibid.). As the following discussion on local cultures and identities in England will show, the notions of 'regional' and 'local' are used almost interchangeably, and in research literature there seems to be a preference for 'regional' over 'local'.

Oakland (2002, 52–54) illustrates the diversity of the regional and local levels and the differences within the four nations of Britain by saying that finding a typical English, Welsh, Scottish or Irish person is as difficult as finding a typical British person. In addition, he points out that in England especially the north-east and north-west regions want to differentiate themselves from London (Oakland 2002, 52). Regional British cultures have often been disregarded, as Higgins, Smith and Storey (2010, 5) note and continue that "it is important to understand regional culture if we are to have a full appreciation of the variations and particularities that go into the make-up of British culture" (ibid.).

According to Oakland (2002, 52), "the customs, accents and behaviour vary considerably and some regional identifications are still strong" in England. This view is supported by McCormick (2003, 52), who claims that regional identities in England are distinctive. McCormick points out that

> the values, attitudes and priorities of people who live in London and its suburbs are different from those who live in the rural and small-town environment of the 'home counties' around London, in the farmlands and the tourist meccas of the south-west, in the old industrial areas of the midlands and the north, and in the dales of Yorkshire and the mountains and lakes of Cumbria. (ibid.)

Tomaney (2010, 81) highlights the importance of a "metropolitan-provincial cultural distinction."

However, O'Driscoll (1995, 47) has a slightly opposing view, according to which: "…a sense of identity based on place of birth is, such as family identity, not very common or strong in most parts of Britain…." Oakland (2002, 11) partly agrees with O'Driscoll by stating that the identification with smaller areas "…was arguably more significant when the British were a rural people living in villages and were less mobile". O'Driscoll (1995, 47), in turn, agrees on mobility being one of the factors which have weakened the sense of local identities, as very few people stay in the same place for all of their lives, and they do not have a strong feeling of belonging to a place. Oakland (2002, 10) specifies, however, that

> Today this identity may still be strongly focused on cities (such as Manchester, Liverpool, Glasgow, Belfast, London and Cardiff) or English and Welsh counties rather than larger regional areas. (ibid.)

This view is shared by Childs (2006, 47) who notes that

> …in England it is the heavily populated metropolitan areas that have created the strongest regional identities. People from these different areas are associated with specific names and local characteristics, though it is their dialect that most obviously distinguishes them.

O' Driscoll (1995, 47) ends up confirming the above as well as suggesting that people coming from Liverpool, Manchester, the Newcastle area and London have particularly strong local identities.

Even if O'Driscoll (ibid.) does not seem to support the idea of strong geographical identities in general, he admits that counties as old divisions seem to "claim the allegiance of some people" and mentions Yorkshire and Cornwall as examples. The particularly strong geographical identity in Cornwall is also noted by McCormick (2003, 52). At county level, Childs (2006, 53) says that "most of England's thirty-nine counties have a recognisable identity and will be said to have their own particular characteristics and distinctive inhabitants" and "one of the strongest ways in which county loyalties are continued is through sport" (ibid.). Oakland (2002, 52) also mentions sports and adds politics, food, habits, competitions, cultural activities and a specific way of life to the areas where, according to him, at the level of counties and local loyalties, the local identities are particularly strong.

Leuerer (2007, 58) states that the North "differs from the rest of the English regions in its greater sense of identity and stronger regional feelings". Tomaney (2010, 84) refers to a study by Ian Taylor et al., where people living in Sheffield and Manchester were interviewed and where a distinguishable "set of values", for example, collectivism and a sense of community were found. Many scholars refer to North-South identification in England. In fact, as John O'Driscoll (1995, 47) says, it is common for many English people to identify themselves as "northerners" or "southerners". Childs (2006, 49) confirms this by saying that there is a "North-South divide, which

is cultural, economical and political." O'Driscoll (1995, 47) highlights the economical differences by saying that the South is richer than the North, also adding that the media dominance by the South has led to resentment in the northerners, who are said to see themselves as tougher, more honest and warmer-hearted than the southerners. According to O'Driscoll (ibid.), stereotypically, the northerners see the southerners as soft, hypocritical and unfriendly, whereas the southerners think of northerners being "rather ignorant and uncultured and interested only in sport and beer-drinking". Oakland (2002, 52) also refers to the feeling of superiority of the Northern English towards the Southern English.

Even if there are certain similarities between the English cities or towns, Childs (2006, 59) says that "British towns are still enormously varied, from the seaside towns, market towns, country towns, tourist towns and industrial towns, to the post-war 'new' towns" (ibid.). Thus, this suggests that cultural variation in textbooks cannot be covered by London-centred stories and a single reference to some other cities. Childs (2006, 61) continues by stating that "most British towns have their own distinctive characteristics or annual events that promote a local cultural identity." As for villages, Childs (2006, 63) suggests a particularly strong communal identity and points out that

> …most villages therefore promote a strong blend of social identity, because people usually have a number of roles within the community, and personal identity, associated with land ownership and family history (ibid.).

As an example of social activities in villages Childs (2006, 63) mentions church-going, jumble sales, charity collecting, fetes and flower shows. In addition, Childs (2006, 66) notes that, in general, "It is often maintained that rural and urban people have different attitudes to the traditions of British life…" However, this is not the only division, but in addition, there are specific characteristics of different kinds of areas, for example:

> …there is a strong coastal culture incorporating trawler fishing, watersports, ports and docks, shipping, yachting and, for visitors, the British tradition of seaside holidays, with its staple ingredients of

> piers, buckets and spades, postcards, amusement arcades, deckchairs, donkey rides and promenading. (Childs 2006, 66.)

The researchers' accounts presented above suggest a great variety of local cultures in England, which will be the starting point of the empirical analysis that follows.

4 Empirical study

This empirical part of the thesis aims to answer to the following question: how does the representation of English local cultures and ways of living in the textbook series *Smart Moves* differ from how English people themselves describe them, and in which ways are they similar? In other words, this comparative study will examine both the extent to which the textbook series includes and the way it depicts different smaller English regions, such as counties, cities, towns and villages, and their inhabitants, as well as how a sample of English people describes their cultures and ways of living in their (former) home regions. In sections 4.1 and 4.2, respectively, I will provide information on the material and methods of the study. This will be followed by the presentation of results in section 4.3, the final section in this chapter.

4.1 Material

As its material and as the basis of the empirical analysis this study employs both the English textbook series *Smart Moves* and face-to-face oral interviews with English people, which were conducted for this study. In the following, I will describe the material by starting with the description of the textbook series in 4.1.1. After this, in 4.1.2, I will provide information on the informants as well as the interview procedure and interview questions.

4.1.1 Textbook series *Smart Moves*

The textbook series *Smart Moves* is aimed at secondary school pupils in Finland studying English as a foreign language. The first book of the series was published by Otava Publishing Company in Keuruu in 2005, the second in 2007, and the third and last book in 2008. Each textbook is accompanied by a student's CD, an exercise book and a Teacher's File and CD, and there are additional exercises for pupils on the website of Otava. *Smart Moves* is probably still one of the most widely used textbook series in Finnish secondary schools, even if it is likely to be replaced by newer series in a few years' time.

For the present study, I only chose to analyse those textbook chapters in the three books, *Smart Moves 1, 2* and *3* (hereafter *SM1, SM2* and *SM3*) that mention England. Most of them are textbook chapters with varying themes. Additionally, short singer profile texts containing background information on English singers are included in the analysis. The material analysed also consists of two special chapters on England: a *Bits 'n' Pieces* fact file double page, the subject of which in *Smart Moves 3* is England (*SM3*, 114–115), and a double page on the *Sights of London* (*SM3*, 116–117).

4.1.2 Interviews

The data was gathered by interviewing 20 people originating from different parts of England, aiming at variation in their original home regions, to the extent it was possible. In 4.1.2.1, I will provide more background information on the informants. The majority of the interviews were made in the spring of 2012. Data collection was completed in the spring of the following year, after conducting a few additional interviews in the hope of a wider range of locations and a more balanced sample. As the interviews were recorded, each informant was asked to sign a form (see Appendix 4) before the recording began, to give their consent for using the data for the purpose of the present study. The length of the interviews varied from about 30 minutes to 60 minutes

depending on the length of answers. The interview procedure and interview questions will be discussed in 4.1.2.2 in more detail. Due to the extensive interview material only a sample of the material has been selected for this study. As this study concentrates on cultural content, some pauses, fillers, such as ‘erm’ and the extensive use of the word ‘like’, as well as repetition of words were omitted at a later stage of transcription, to the extent it was found to improve the readability of the examples provided.

4.1.2.1 Informant profiles

The criteria for choosing the interviewees were the following: the informants should be 18–34 year old young adults, born and raised in England. This age range was chosen, as in developmental psychology, people under 35 are often labelled as “young adults”. Thus, it was presumed that the informants were in a relatively similar phase in terms of their identity development. Naturally, there might have been individual differences and bigger differences between both ends of the scale. Half of the interviewees were 19–24 years old and the other half 25–34 years old, and they were all students or young working adults. The sample includes interviews of 10 males and 10 females. Out of 20 informants eight were interviewed in Brighton, England. These eight interviewees were found through the social network created while working in Brighton. The rest of the interviews were made in Tampere and in a smaller town in Southern Finland. These informants were found via university mailing lists or contacts.

To gather some background information on the informants, the informants were first asked to tell their name and age, as well as their current hometown and where they originally come from. It seemed to be difficult for many of them to name their original home city, hometown or home village if they had moved several times in their childhood. Therefore, the informants were allowed to choose the one of which they had most memories or the one they seemed to identify themselves with the most. The following list (see Figure 1) shows the length of the interview, gender and age of

the informant, and his or her original home county and home city, hometown or home village. The accompanying map (see Figure 2) shows the locations of these cities, towns and villages.

M1	19	Reading, Berkshire	0:47:31
F1	29	Manchester, Greater Manchester	0:49:15
F2	25	Washington, West Sussex	0:29:17
F3	22	Croydon, Greater London	0:29:04
M2	24	Rothwell, Northamptonshire	0:24:51
F4	21	Romford, Greater London	0:48:40
F5	27	Radlett, Hertfordshire	0:23:42
M3	29	Chesterfield, Derbyshire	0:36:50
F6	23	Taunton, Somerset/Devon	0:23:14
M4	25	Sidmouth, Devon	0:29:10
M5	26	Harrow, Greater London	0:48:13
M6	20	Liverpool, Merseyside	0:58:10
M7	21	Chingford, Greater London	0:24:24
F7	21	Watton-at-Stone, Hertfordshire	0:36:12
M8	34	Seaton, Cumbria	0:58:08
M9	28	Haywards Heath, West Sussex	0:41:30
F8	21	Hull, East Yorkshire	0:42:48
F9	20	Stroud, Gloucestershire	1:09:39
M10	25	Gosbeck/Ipswich, Suffolk	0:49:59
F10	26	Northampton, Northamptonshire / Milton Keynes, Buckinghamshire	0:54:02

Figure 1. Code and age of the informant, original home city, hometown or home village and home county, length of interview. M=male, F=female.

Figure 2. Home cities, hometowns and home villages of the informants.

4.1.2.2 Interview questions and procedure

The interviews were based on a set of questions (Appendix 2), which was formed after reading relevant background material. As the basis for these questions, I primarily used the division of British cultural identities and British culture by Storry and Childs (2006) and Oakland (2002). In the end, the analysis included questions 1–17, 19 and 26. As the main interest of the study is to see how the daily life is described, in the analysis, I decided to concentrate especially on questions 4–7 and 12–16, in which the informants were asked to describe their local areas in terms of their size and location, nature and surroundings, atmosphere and way of living, local traditions and food, sports and leisure time. Due to the multiple possible ways of understanding the notion of region (see 3.2), I later decided to employ 'local' for the purpose of the present study, even if at the time of forming the interview questions, the term I mostly used was 'home region'.

The interviews were semi-structured, which means that the questions guided the informants to talk about certain topics, but they also invited them to reflect and to elaborate relatively freely on the topic. Sometimes additional questions were used to encourage the informant to talk more about the subject. Many interviewees gave concrete examples from their own lives, also when they were not explicitly asked to do so. Clarifications were provided if the interviewees signalled that they were not sure of having understood the question.

A relatively large amount of thought was given to interviews as communicative situations**.** However, even if I tried to follow the main principle of avoiding affirming responses, it was sometimes difficult, partly because of the interview being lengthy and on a challenging topic, and partly because of the inexperience of both the interviewer and the interviewees. As an interviewer I wanted to show that I was listening attentively, and it sometimes seemed that the interviewees needed some kind of a response to signal that they had understood the question correctly.

In general, I wanted to make the interviewing situation as comfortable as possible for the informants. I aimed at openness and creating an interview situation which would feel natural and

conversational, trying to give the interviewees as much space as possible, and following thus the tradition of phenomenological interviews (Laine 2007, 37). Despite the fact that the interview was semi-structured, the interviews seemed to flow naturally from one topic to another in a conversational manner. The order of questions was found logical, as without knowing the questions, the informants sometimes gave an answer to the next question. In such cases it was possible to skip a question if they did not want to add anything.

Most of the interviews were conducted in public places, such as cafés, pubs or the university restaurant. Some interviews were made at the home of the informant or his or her friend. The place was suggested either by the informants themselves or by the interviewer. In the best case, the informant and interviewer were able to meet so that there were no other people present. In a few cases, for practical reasons or on a particular wish on the part of the interviewee, an extra listener was accepted. It is hard to estimate to which extent this may have affected the results.

Some of the informants were met for the first time at the time of the interview, whereas some the interviewer had already been acquainted with. The level of familiarity between the interviewer and the interviewees may also have had a small effect on the interview situation and the answers, even though no sign of this was detected. The length of the interview, for example, did not show any correlation with the level of familiarity. More than on the level of familiarity, it perhaps depended on their personality, and whether the informants felt more at ease being interviewed by a total stranger or somebody who they had met before.

During the interviews, I acknowledged the possibility of cultural differences in interaction and interviewing practice. As Pietilä (2011, 415) points out, when the interviewer and the interviewees represent different cultures, it is good to think of possible effects on the interaction; whether the interviewee would speak differently if the interviewer had the same cultural background. For example, some interviewees seemed to be concerned about whether I, as a foreigner, could understand their local dialect, or whether I was familiar with certain aspects of the

British culture in general or the particular local culture. Pietilä (2011, 416) says that it is common for the interviewees to talk more about things that would not normally get as much attention, as they are not self-evident and known to an interviewer from another culture. Similarly, Blommaert (2005, 206) writes that in a foreign country, a person talking about his or her own country tends to mention things that might be categorised as stereotypical, as he or she thinks that those are the things the interviewer is expecting to hear.

First, one might think that being abroad and being able to make comparisons is a positive thing, but Blommaert (ibid.) seems to suggest that this might, in fact, encourage stereotypes which in the usual home setting would not be considered relevant information. As Pietilä (2011, 415) notes, the interviewee can feel like he or she is a representative of his or her own culture, which might lead to highlighting differences between the different national cultures. Along the same lines, Pietilä (2011, 416) also says that the idea of comparison might lead to creating flattering images of one's own culture, which do not match the reality, or give the interviewee an urge to highlight the negative aspects, as other members of the same society are not present.

In relation to the present study these observations are interesting, as over half of the English people interviewed were in Finland at the time of the interview. However, 45 % of the interviewees can be said to have had relatively little knowledge of the interviewer's country Finland, as they had never visited the country or only very briefly. In comparison, the remaining 55 % had been studying in Finland as an exchange student or a degree student from one month up to several years, or they had been working in Finland for a number of years. In the case of two expatriates, it was noted that they both talked relatively openly about their negative feelings towards their regions of origin. To what extent this could be seen to support Pietilä's (ibid.) suggestion concerning "an urge to highlight the negative aspects" or simply be the genuine experience is hard to estimate. Similarly, it is impossible to be sure when an informant is showing genuine pride over one's city, town or village of origin, and when he or she is "creating flattering images".

4.2 Method

The textbooks and the interview data are mainly analysed qualitatively by using content analysis, even if in the textbook analysis also the number of occurrences of certain items is stated. According to Schreier (2012, 2), content analysis is especially applicable for material where the meanings being constructed tend to be less standardised and require interpretation. Tuomi and Sarajärvi (2013, 91) describe content analysis as both a single method and a more flexible framework, which can be applied to many types of research. As Tuomi and Sarajärvi (ibid.) note, content analysis is, in fact, the basis for many qualitative methods, even if they also point out that content analysis is also known as a quantitative method (ibid.).

According to Tuomi and Sarajärvi (2013, 93), after deciding on what to look for in the material and after coding the material, there are three different ways to approach the material: to create categories, to search for themes, or to organise the findings into types. The present study will mainly employ the second one, discussing what is being said about themes. This applies especially to the analysis of interview examples, where, following the tradition of a case study, too strong generalisations should be avoided. On the basis of the answers of one or two interviewees from the same region, it would not be possible to make generalisations of certain areas or people coming from local communities, even if some shared tendencies might be found. Furthermore, the intention of this study is mainly to show that there is variation. In this respect, the primary focus will be on searching for differences, but I will be taking similarities into account as well, even if Tuomi and Sarajärvi (2013, 93) recommend that either similarities or differences should be chosen. Following the structure of the interviews, the themes were divided into categories, which were used in the comparison of the interview data with the textbooks examined.

When discussing different types of analysis Tuomi and Sarajärvi (2013, 95) refer to Eskola's (2001, 2007) division to material-based, theory-guided and theory-based analysis (the concepts translated freely). In the current study, the approach is theory-guided, which means that the

theoretical framework is introduced, and it guides the analysis to some extent. However, the analysis does not aim to answer to questions risen solely from the theoretical background, but the material and the theory will contemplate each other. Tuomi and Sarajärvi (2013, 95–96) say it is hard to say whether these approaches are purely inductive, abductive or deductive in their character.

According to Tuomi and Sarajärvi (2013, 103) the analysis is preceded by grouping and reducing, which were also the steps taken in the present study prior to the actual analysis of the content. In the end, grouping was material-based, as themes associated together by the informants were placed under one category. For example, when asked about the atmosphere of the city, town, village or county, the informants sometimes already described the way of living.

4.3 Results

In the following analysis, the textbook series *Smart Moves* will be examined in order to show an example of how England is depicted in English textbooks aimed at Finnish pupils. Alongside the textbook analysis, interview examples will be included in the analysis. The themes were first divided into three broad categories: region; way of living and traditions; people and language (see Appendix 1). However, later the three categories were divided into eight subcategories which form the structure of the final analysis. At the end of each subsection, a short summary of the main observations is provided. Each subcategory concentrates on a particular aspect of local cultures, although overlap could not always be avoided.

4.3.1 Counties, cities, towns and villages

The three *Smart Moves* books include three counties, which are Devon, Yorkshire and Staffordshire. Each county is mentioned once. The occurrences of cities and towns were counted and listed (see Appendix 1). The following is a list of the cities and towns found in the three books, where the number of occurrences is given in brackets: London (38), Norwich (12), Eton (8),

Liverpool (5), Manchester (5), Oxford (2), Swindon (2), Folkestone (2), Sheffield (2), Brighton (2), Birmingham (2), Leeds (2), Bradford (2), Newcastle upon Tyne (2), Bristol (1), Burslem (1), Stoke-on-Trent (1), Reading (1), Salisbury (1). No English villages are mentioned in *Smart Moves*.

London is dominant with its 38 references. In some of the 38 occurrences the choice of the city is logical, as it follows, for example, the choice of a particular artist or song fitting the theme of the chapter. In many examples, however, London as the capital city appears to have been an easy choice, whereas including another town, city or even village would have brought more variety to locations. Norwich comes second with its 12 references, which are all in the same chapter (*SM1*, Friendship across the sea, 65–69), however. Out of 38 references to London, 21 are in the chapter *Sights in London* (*SM3*, 116–117). All in all, and regarding other cities and towns mentioned in the textbook series, as the map below shows (see Figure 3), both North and South, and East and West are relatively well represented. Eton with its eight occurrences, all in chapter *Worlds apart* (*SM2*, 58), and Liverpool and Manchester with altogether five mentions each are strongly present compared to most of the other cities and towns.

What the chapters in *Smart Moves* seem to lack is a map showing the exact locations of the towns, cities, villages and counties. Providing a map with all the locations mentioned in the textbook series could help pupils to remember them better and give them a more accurate picture of England as a whole and of its variety. In the *Help Pages*, the last pages of each *Smart Moves* textbook, no detailed map of England or the United Kingdom is provided. Furthermore, even the way England is represented on the fact file pages *England – Bits 'n' Pieces* (*SM3*, 114–115) is incomprehensive. The chapter refers to London as the "capital" and mentions a few "other big cities", such as "Birmingham, Leeds, Bradford, Liverpool and Manchester" (*SM3*, Bits 'n' Pieces, 114). These cities are also marked on the accompanying map (ibid.), but with the notable exception of Bradford. Similarly, Salisbury is mentioned in *Bits 'n' Pieces*, but it does not appear on the map. By contrast, the map includes Brighton, which occurs once in another textbook of the series (*SM2*,

Welcome to my planet!, 67) but not in the textbook where the map is, and Stonehenge, which is situated in the proximity of Salisbury. Therefore, the logic behind the selection of the cities and towns can be questioned.

Regarding the interviews conducted for the present study, the informants come from different parts of England, from big cities, medium-sized and small towns as well as villages (for further information, see the map and information provided in section 4.1.2.1). As mentioned in section 4.1.2, it was sometimes discovered during the course of the interview that the interviewee actually came from a smaller place than the one he or she had first mentioned. In this case it was not clear whether the informants identified themselves with a bigger town rather than their local community, or whether they thought that nobody would be able to locate the smaller town or village and for this reason chose to talk about a bigger place, or one they thought is generally better-known.

In the textbooks, in most cases no description of the city or town being discussed is provided. Thus, mentioning a particular town or city seems somewhat random rather than a deliberate choice, as it is unlikely that town names will be remembered without the possibility of associating them with anything. Instead of only providing the name of a city, town or village, in many texts local cultural information could have been easily added for the purpose of learning. A good example of this is the chapter *Welcome to my planet* (*SM2,* 66–67) where teenagers and parents have been interviewed and their locations marked under the extracts, but no further information is provided. If taking the limited space into consideration, a good alternative could have been to provide at least an additional information search task. The three books also include texts where the location could have been given but this has not been done. For example, the chapter *The little runaway* (*SM1*, 75) includes the expression “nearby corner shop” and other similar expressions of a small local area.

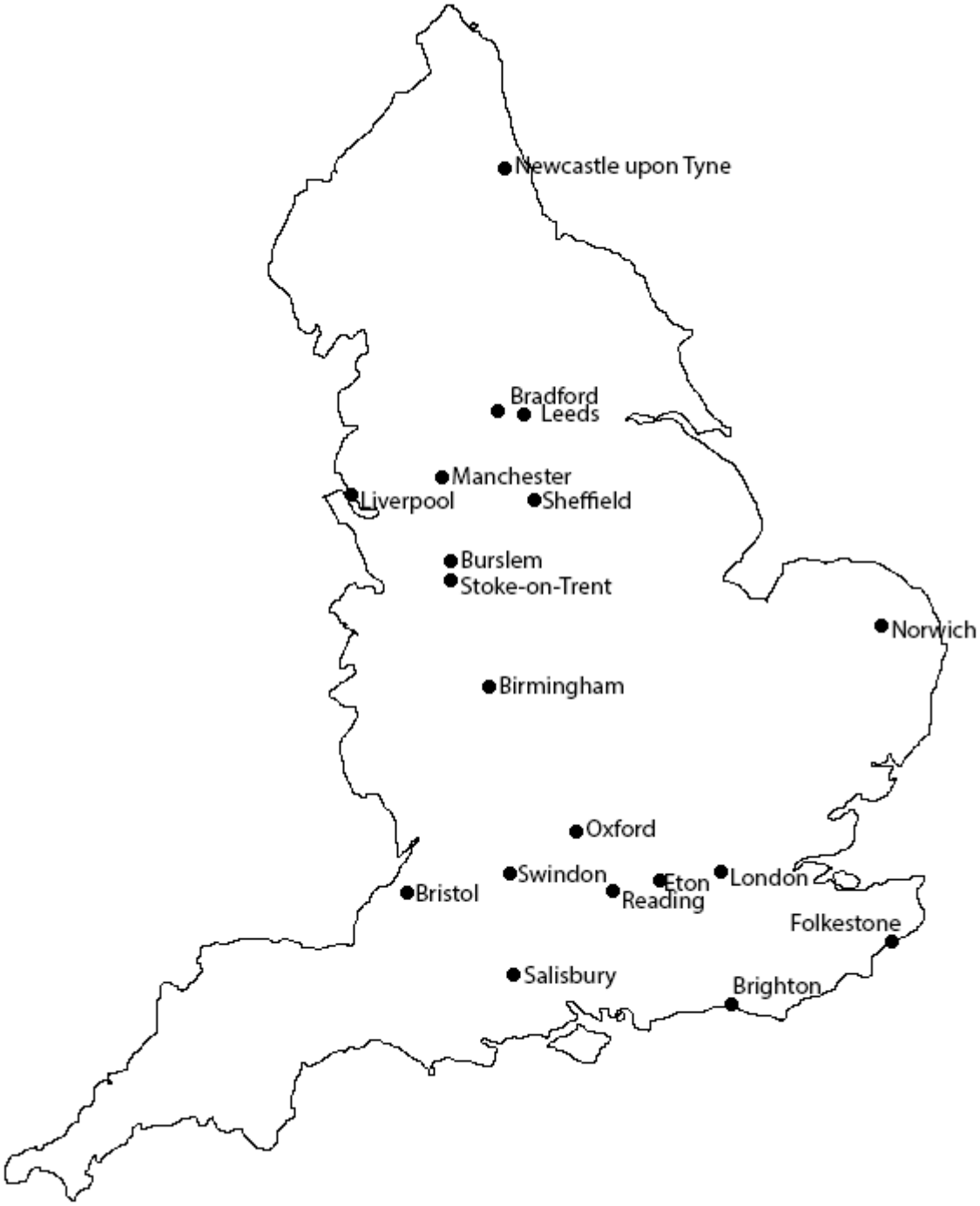

Figure 3. English cities and towns mentioned in *Smart Moves*.

Furthermore, it is surprising to see Devon among the city names with no further explanation stating that it is actually the name of a county. If their teacher does not remember to highlight the

difference, leaving this kind of information out could mislead the pupils to believe that Devon is also an English city.

In short, a strong dominance of references to the capital city can be detected in *Smart Moves*. The distribution of the rest of the occurrences between North and South, East and West is relatively even, but the textbook series does not mention any English villages. The books examined typically include plain references to town names, thus in many cases the opportunity to provide more cultural information has been neglected. The choice to name a particular city or town seems somewhat arbitrary. Furthermore, in some texts the location is not provided, even if they appear to describe a local community in England. Even the maps provided in the books leave much to be desired. Compared with the textbooks examined, the general distribution in the interview data was found to be better, even if many interviewees came from Greater London. In addition to their cities, towns and villages of origin, the informants often talked about other locations as well.

4.3.2 Location and size

The three books examined for this study do not state the location for most of the English cities or towns mentioned in the textbook series. In the few cases where the location is provided, this is mostly done in reference to the capital, for example, Norwich is said to be located "in the east, about 185 kilometres from London" (*SM1*, Friendship across the sea, 68) and Eton "about 30 kilometres west of London" (*SM2*, Worlds apart, 58). Neither of these expressions include region or county. Moreover, the first example is, in fact, somewhat inaccurate in its vagueness, as in reality, Norwich is located northeast of the capital, and mentioning it solely in reference to the capital city does not necessarily help pupils to locate it. The idea here was probably to refer to something that the pupils have most likely already heard of, London. At the same time, however, the potential of teaching them something new by using more accurate expressions, has been neglected. The only other expressions of location appearing in the books examined, "Bradfield, a fictional northern English city" (*SM2*, Reader: Billy Elliot, 111) and "a small mining town in northern England"

(*SM2*, Reader: Billy Elliot, 125), have been taken from the screenplay of *Billy Elliot*. Both expressions only locate the fictional city somewhere in the north of England.

In the first content questions, the informants were asked to describe the region and county as well as the city, town, village in terms of their size and atmosphere. In terms of cities, towns and villages, as the examples show, there is variation both in location and size. Even if in the textbooks there is practically no information on counties and regions in which the cities and towns are located, many informants included this information in their descriptions. Some informants, for example the informant from Rothwell (example 1), describe the location and size of their hometown or home village in relation to the main town or city of the county and sometimes also to some other towns nearby.

> 1. Rothwell is quite a small town, but there are a few bigger towns and there's the county town of Northampton, which is almost like a city really, but that's about 15 miles away. (M2, Rothwell, Northamptonshire)

In the example above, it is also interesting to see how the informant uses the words 'town' and 'city'. While the difference might be perfectly clear to a native speaker, a Finnish pupil who in Finnish would probably use the word 'kaupunki' in both cases, might be baffled if hearing this type of an example in a conversation for the first time. I found this and a few other examples in the interview data possibly confusing from a linguistic perspective and from the perspective of a pupil learning English as a foreign language. Discussing these phenomena at a general, national level could be easily combined with local, real-life examples and a discussion of local cultures. In addition, as a side note, even if it is a national level observation, many informants and many English people in general use miles instead of kilometres when speaking of distances. The unit of measurement affects the way we describe and understand the world, and therefore, to facilitate communication, such differences should be taken into consideration in a learner's materials. For this reason, when providing information on distances in textbooks, it might be a good idea to

indicate the location of a city, town or village in both units of measurement, in miles as well as in kilometres.

In cases where a person comes from a border area, such as from "the Southwest, on the Devon/Somerset border" (F6, Taunton, Somerset/Devon), the local identity can be more mixed. The interview data shows that sometimes a mixed local identity can produce a more complex description of the exact location (example 2). In example 2 below, the informant chooses to name the location which he or she finds generally more widely known first. She also describes an urban identity that would seem to consist of several urban communities, instead of including only the one where she is officially registered at. The textbooks examined do not take such complexity of personal experience and identity into consideration. In another example, the informant says that the exact location is "in-between Essex the county and the outskirts of London" (F4, Romford, Greater London).

> 2. The town Romford it's the biggest town I grew up in and actually I'm technically from Hornchurch, which is another town, but the area where I live is actually a lot of towns in very close proximity, and that's what makes up the borough of Havering, because people know it more, it's a bigger town. (F4, Romford, Greater London)

The following (example 3) is an example of how the official county divide does not always correspond to the belongingness felt by the people and another type of borders, that of accents.

> 3. It's quite a small county. In comparison to, as it used to be Lancashire, but now it's been turned to Merseyside. And it's quite wide really 'cause very north of Merseyside regards itself Lancashire still and it's got more of a Lancashire accent and then it's got like Liverpool, which has got its own accent and that's very much…it regards itself as Liverpool….(M6, Liverpool, Merseyside)

The example above illustrates the important role played by accent in one's local identity and the difference between cultural regions and regions as administrative units (Leuerer 2007, see 3.2), in a case where the older borders seem to have prevailed in the minds of the inhabitants. Even if this particular example concerns the local cultures in England, it also demonstrates a relatively recent global phenomenon. At least in many European countries, there has been a tendency to replace the

old, perhaps more culturally motivated boundaries, such as the old Finnish tribe boundaries, with new administrative regions. This is to say that the 'local' could be well discussed alongside with the 'global' in language teaching in particular, as well as generally in the educational setting.

In the textbook series *Smart Moves*, the size of a city, town or village is only referred to in the descriptions already mentioned above: "a small mining town in northern England" (*SM3*, Reader: Billy Elliot, 125), "capital" (*SM3*, Bits 'n' Pieces, 114) and "other big cities" (ibid.). The last expression is used for listing six big cities among which is Liverpool (ibid.). One of the interviewees has a similar way of putting the size of Liverpool into the English context by stating that

> 4. …it's one of the top 5 biggest cities in England. (M6, Liverpool, Merseyside)

However, it should be noted that such information is more likely to have been learnt than the phenomenon being experienced by the informant himself. Nevertheless, it facilitates comparisons between one's own city and other cities, creating thus a link between the local and the national levels of identity. The example above shows that even if the ways how local people talk about their cultures tend to be more subjective, to describe the size of a city, they can well choose to use a superlative such as the above, either as a fact or a praise. Finnish pupils are likely to be familiar with such utterances, as, for example, a person coming from Tampere could equally say that he or she comes from the "3rd biggest town of Finland". On the other hand, somebody originating from a small town or village is unlikely to be aware of the national ranking of their town or village. Such expressions as the example above, even if somewhat vague without the exact number of population, seem to be part of the local identities as well and should therefore be included in textbooks, as is done in *Bits 'n' Pieces* in the series *Smart Moves*.

More indirect expressions of size can also include a comparison of the population size and the actual size of the city. For example, in a metropolitan city, there are

5. …millions of people walking around in a very small sort of enclosed area.... (M5, Harrow, Greater London)

This description can be based both on a personal experience as well as on information that has been acquired. As a way of describing the crowds of people typical of a metropolitan city such as London, it is similar to "Over three million people use the Tube every day" (*SM3*, Sights of London, 116). Even if both expressions suggest that the area is small compared to the number of people, at the same time it is implied that, nevertheless, the city and its suburbs must make up a relatively large area, as many of the people who walk in the streets or use the Tube daily also live in the area.

While the size of a metropolitan city is probably understood more or less in a similar way, the following examples show that especially at the level of towns the concept of size is more relational. What is understood as being a big or a small town may differ from person to person. The subjectivity of the words 'quite' and 'fairly' in the example

6. Romford is quite a big town, it's not a city, but it's fairly large. (F4, Romford, Greater London)

becomes particularly clear when the informant says that

7. …the town Romford it's the biggest town [she] grew up in…. (F4, Romford, Greater London)

In example 7 above, the informant makes a comparison based on her own life history, making this piece of information thus valuable for understanding the uniqueness of her personal experience. On the other hand, providing the number of inhabitants might help the interlocutor or reader to picture the city, town or village better, as in the following examples (examples 8 and 9):

8. My hometown Sidmouth was very very small, it had 12 000 people. (M4, Sidmouth, Devon)

9. The village I live in is Gosbeck. Actually, in Gosbeck there are probably about 2500 people. (M10, Gosbeck/Ipswich, Suffolk)

Many of the informants and many English people in general come from small towns or villages, descriptions of which the textbook series seemingly lacks. Some informants who say that they come from a very small village, such as Washington of 'less than a thousand people', specify that they actually live in a place which is smaller than a village (example 10):

> 10. And I don't even live in the village, I live in a small hamlet, called [X]. There's just one road of five houses and that's it. (F2, Washington, West Sussex.)

Similarly, also the informant from Somerset actually comes from a hamlet near the town of Taunton (F6, Taunton, Somerset/Devon). It might be that a learner comes from a similar place in terms of its size. Thus, being aware of the more subtle nuances at the level of vocabulary does not only help the learner to understand the local life better, but it can help him or her in communication situations to use expressions, such as *hamlet*, which are more precise when describing his or her home region.

Unlike the textbooks examined, some informants make comparisons with another country, city, town or village as a way of illustrating the size of their home city, hometown or home village (example 11):

> 11. Not particularly big. Apparently the population of Croydon is the same as the population of Iceland. (F3, Croydon, Greater London)

In the example above, the informant from Croydon, Greater London makes a connection to something that she has learnt about other countries. The example shows an interesting way of visualising the size of an English town, the way it connects geography with something that the interviewer, and also Finnish pupils, are likely to have already learnt earlier: the Nordic countries, including Iceland. In the following example (12), a comparison is made to connect the new piece of information with Finnish towns, helping the interlocutor to put it into a more familiar context.

> 12. …well rather large, you could say. Quite large area I think. Chingford it's about the same size as Tampere, at least it was then. (M7, Chingford, Greater London)

In a similar way, the informant from Liverpool (M6, Liverpool, Merseyside) describes Liverpool as "quite a big city" and "bigger than Tampere". The informants may want to reduce some of the subjectivity and vagueness of expressions, such as "rather large" or "quite a big city" by making a comparison to something that is known to the interlocutor. On the other hand, the examples show awareness of the current country of residence, Finland.

To sum up, *Smart Moves* includes only a few references to the locations of the cities and towns mentioned in the textbook series. These expressions are significantly vaguer than the ones used by the informants. Furthermore, they show the location in relation to the capital and not to neighbouring towns or cities, as is the case with the interviews. Unlike the textbooks, the interview data also gives information on counties. The way how the informants describe the locations sometimes shows mixed identities, as some of them come from border areas of two or more counties. On the descriptions of size, in their otherwise seemingly subjective ways of describing, many informants seem to aim at more precision and objectivity by providing the number of population or a comparison. Some "seemingly learnt expressions" of comparison were also found, which reminded me of the expressions in *Smart Moves*.

4.3.3 Nature and surroundings

> 13. It's quite quiet, very green, quite low down at the bottom of South Down's National Park. It's quite pretty. (F2, Washington, West Sussex.)

As the informant in the example (13) above, also many other interviewees describe their living environment as something very different from that of a metropolitan city, which can be seen as a further proof of the importance of providing a variety of cultural images. In terms of location, the example above shows a way of combining a description of nature with a location. The series *Smart Moves*, however, is not rich in local descriptions of nature and surroundings. The chapter on Norwich includes a picture with the title "Swans on river Wensum" (*SM1*, Friendship across the

sea, 68–69). The only other reference to nature is in the London chapter (*SM3*, Sights of London, 116–117): "There are a lot of parks in London." Even if these two occurrences are valid descriptions of an urban atmosphere, as the only references to nature they are not representative of the fact that there is also a lot of countryside in England. The chapter *Hobbies unite* (*SM1*, 38–39) includes pictures of nature-related activities, but listening to the tape reveals, however, that these pictures are from Wales, not from England.

When asked about nature, the informants describe landscapes ranging, for example, from the coast and heaps of Suffolk and closeness to a large forest (M10, Gosbeck/Ipswich, Suffolk) to the Lake District of Cumbria (M8, Seaton, Cumbria), the former being also described as an "area of outstanding natural beauty" and the latter as "quite famous in the world". These descriptions show that the informants are aware of what other people think of their home regions and the kinds of attributes that are most likely to be attached to them also in the marketing materials of these areas. It is hard to estimate whether the choice of words results from a "sense of duty" in terms of showing respect towards something that has generally been acknowledged, or whether it is something that has become an internalised part of the local identity. The examples 14 and 15 demonstrate that in terms of surroundings, different areas have their particular characteristics. Another interesting thing about the descriptions of the nature in Suffolk (example 14) and in Cumbria (example 15) is the fact that the informants, who were both in Finland at the time of the interview, compare the nature in their home counties to that of Finland:

14. …an area of Suffolk, which is very sandy so here you have kind of pine trees, a little bit like in Finland and also heathland there as well. (M10, Gosbeck/Ipswich, Suffolk)

15. It's countryside, it's called the Lake District. Cumbria it's…got about six lakes. It's not so much as in Finland, but Finland is a whole country. This is just one particular area, Cumbria. (M8, Seaton, Cumbria)

Such comparisons could help pupils to compare and combine new information with their own experiences of the local nature in their home countries.

The informant from Seaton says that there is freedom and space in the fields of Cumbria, which he finds distinctive to his county (example 16). The feeling of open space and freedom would seem to form a part of the informant's local identity. As another example illustrates, nature as an open space can be found important especially by the younger generations (example 17). The informant from Stroud has experienced this herself as well (example 18). Such a memory is a sign of an important experience, something that has been an inherent part of the growing up and the process of building one's identity. Such accounts and memories, told from a young person's perspective, could also give learners a possible point of identification.

16. Whereas I think if you would do that anywhere else, it would be like kind of, everything'd be boxed off and forbidden and couldn't sneak under a hedgerow and go into the fields or something. (M8, Seaton, Cumbria)

17. There's always space for teenagers, even though they hang out in the town centre, but they go camping and stuff as well in the fields and stuff. (F9, Stroud, Gloucestershire).

18. So I remember when I was a teenager, we'd just go over the fields to just get away from everybody else. (F9, Stroud, Gloucestershire)

As the following example shows, the place where one has grown up is important and the appreciation for countryside grows already from its familiarity (example 19).

19. I live in just outside of Ipswich so actually, I live in the countryside. So for me it's kind of, I've grown up in the countryside. (M10, Gosbeck/Ipswich, Suffolk)

In comparison, the following example, also from the west of England (example 20), depicts people's awareness of and an admiration for nature, which shows as occupying the forest, for example, at such a high rate that it turns into crowdedness, which the informant experiences in a negative way.

> 20. Everybody is very, very protective of the national like the nature around. We have what they call the Jurassic Coast, which where there's lots of fossils and bones in the cliffs and people are very protective of all the wildlife around them, and people love to go rambling, like walking everywhere, and you can always find people in the forest, you can never escape people, because they are always walking and driving. (M4, Sidmouth, Devon)

At the level of vocabulary, the example refers to *rambling* as "like walking everywhere", which is a typical activity in the English countryside. On the other hand, the informant talks about something that is distinctive of his local area, the "fossils and bones" and "wildlife", which can be seen as a special reason for people's protective attitude towards their natural environment.

Another informant describes her local area as a mixture of different elements, both urban and rural (example 21). Some other informants talk about variation inside their home counties as well (example 22). In terms of atmosphere, the changes inside a county can be significant.

> 21. It's quite a good mix of sort of residential areas, city centre and countryside really, and as you go further on in Essex, there's even more and more countryside. Yeah, and Essex goes all the way out to the coast and to the beaches. (F4, Romford, Greater London)

> 22. …a lot of countryside, just on the edge of the Peak District – very nice part of England, very green, lots of rolling hills, the further you go there is the moor as well, not a traditionally kind of English countryside, but working class villages (M3, Chesterfield, Derbyshire)

The stereotypical image of a county does not always correspond to the description of an individual town in the county. For example, the informant from Hull, East Yorkshire (example 23) contrasts the typical image of Yorkshire and its dales with the more urban surroundings of Hull, where

> 23. …a lot of how the city looks it's quite a lot of old like industrial buildings, and empty buildings. (F8, Hull, East Yorkshire)

These examples demonstrate a great diversity inside counties. The division into urban areas and countryside is not necessarily always clear-cut. The example 23 also tells about the prevailing class distinction as well as heritage. It is important to note that even if some places may have evolved

during the years, they can remain stigmatised to some extent in the eyes of people coming from other areas, yet on the other hand, representing the tradition for people originating from the area.

Living in a city does not necessarily mean giving up on nature and not appreciating it, as the examples from Chingford in Greater London and Liverpool (examples 24 and 25), respectively, demonstrate.

> 24. As quite green, especially for London, 'cause we had a…Epping forest was next to a nothing…that's one of the largest forests in the UK, at least in England (M7, Chingford, Greater London)
>
> 25. …the city doesn't have a lot of green areas and stuff like that, but then the suburbs are quite, like there's a lot of forest, there's like a nature reserve very close to where I live, and it's got like red squirrels, and it's one of the only places in the country that is actually red squirrels are native to that area. (M6, Liverpool, Merseyside)

Similarly, the informant from Manchester (F1, Manchester, Greater Manchester) says that if people want to escape the "hustle and bustle of the city centre", it is possible to be in the countryside "within 20 minutes". The stereotypical image might be that people living in a big city have no green areas, whereas the examples illustrate that in reality, people living in a suburb of a metropolis might have nature on their doorsteps. In fact, the examples show that a large forest or a nature reserve with a special animal species can exist in an otherwise urban area. However, despite the "greenery and farmland" in the outskirts of the city, the informant from Liverpool highlights the urban (example 26):

> 26. It's not that rural it's mainly a city. (M6, Liverpool, Merseyside)

The nature can be something that the residents are particularly proud of. For example, the informant from Berkshire (M1, Reading, Berkshire) praises the nature, history and heritage in his home county. At the same time, he admits that the relative closeness to nature does not necessarily show in the daily lives of the people (example 27).

27. Most people live in the city in the urban area. They don’t really see much of the countryside during their working days. (M1, Reading, Berkshire)

Therefore, the personal connection that people living in cities have with nature does not necessarily depend so much on the size of the city, but it can also depend on, for example, how central they live, how easy the access to nature is, as well as how they organise their daily lives and how busy they are, only to mention a few of all imaginable factors. However, example 28 below demonstrates that it is hard to make any generalisations on something as personal as the relation to nature. It also shows that family as a level of identification can have a great impact on other levels of identification. Furthermore, the informant from Manchester (example 29) rightly points out that regardless of location, there are always people who do not care about nature.

28. I don’t think there is so much a connection with nature in the city, like, well for me and my family, I don’t think there is, because we live very like central, like in the centre of the city so there is no like greenery or around this. Only like football pitches, some things like this. (F8, Hull, East Yorkshire)

29. …everywhere in the country there are people who would rather just walk to the local pub. (F1, Manchester, Greater Manchester)

An informant, a former inhabitant of the city of Croydon (example 30) speaks of an urban identity, which can show as less appreciation for nature, illustrating at the same time that there are personal differences.

30. I quite personally loved going to the bird sanctuary and going around the woods and that sort of thing, but I don't know if that's really something that many people appreciate around there, because it's more sort of city kind of vibe. (F3, Croydon, Greater London)

In general, the surroundings are found important (example 31):

31. I think the surroundings mean a lot. I think the city means a lot to people of Liverpool. (M6, Liverpool, Merseyside)

All in all, the data analysed shows a clear difference between the urban and rural areas of England. Again, the interview data turns out to be more versatile in its descriptions of the nature and surroundings. Unlike the textbooks examined, which concentrate solely on describing urban areas, the informants describe both urban and rural surroundings as well as their mixture, and the way it shows in people's daily lives.

The data also demonstrates that the stereotypical images of a county do not always correspond to the reality at a more local level. In addition, the informants make use of comparisons between England and Finland when describing nature. The interviews demonstrate the importance of the surroundings, making clear, however, that the relation to nature can differ from person to person and is not necessarily something that is shared. The informant accounts both give an insight into personal feelings and perceptions of nature and hint on the possibility of finding more general tendencies.

4.3.4 Atmosphere and way of living

The informants' descriptions of nature are often connected to atmosphere and the way of living, as some of them also talk about the heritage, origin and the particular purpose for which their city, town or village was built. For example, according to the informant from Ipswich, the town was built as a "kind of a port town" (M10, Gosbeck/Ipswich, Suffolk). In seaside towns, there can remain a strong emotional bond to the sea and heritage, as the sea used to bring the living to many families. This is illustrated by an example from Hull (example 32). Other examples regarding particular heritage includes an example of a market town (example 33), where the informant combines the description of the size, surroundings and lifestyle and the original purpose of the town.

> 32. I think if the river and the sea and that is counted as the nature, there's a strong link with that of people because most people who live in Hull are families from Hull…but families did have something to do with the fishing industry and it played like a really big part in Hull so it's still like remembered and there's still like a lot of

> heritage to do with the river and what it brought….(F8, Hull, East Yorkshire)

> 33. Rothwell is a small market town so it's got about I'd say 10.000 inhabitants and the region around it is kind of semi-rural so around there's lots of farms around the town, but also inside you tend to find that the people don't leave a lot into the countryside, and if they do, they go to one of the bigger towns nearby. (M2, Rothwell, Northamptonshire)

The examples above and "very rural, like a gold mining village" (M3, Chesterfield, Derbyshire) have similarities with the expression "a small mining town in northern England" (*SM3*, Reader: Billy Elliot, 125–127) in the textbook series, despite the fact that the town described in the textbook is fictional. It should be noted that even if highlighting the industrial history of the North is important in terms of the history and heritage of the area, without no further up-to-date information on Northern English regions and towns and their variety today, the pupil might be left in the belief that they have remained unchanged. Another description of English cultural heritage in the textbook series is when Norwich is described as "a pretty old city, from 62 AD when the Romans were here first" of Norwich (*SM1*, Friendship across the sea, 68–69)". The description continues with more information on the cultural heritage of the city: "Then the Normans came and built our castle and cathedral between 1067 and 1120 – these buildings are still standing" (ibid.).

Informants who originate from big cities describe the atmosphere there as "generally speaking quite good" (M5, Harrow, Greater London) and "quite a nice city atmosphere" (M6, Liverpool, Merseyside), even if "people are very busy, people don't usually have time, it's quite a busy city" (M5, Harrow, Greater London) or "everyone is quite friendly and quite busy" (M6, Liverpool, Merseyside). The problems of big metropolitan cities are also mentioned in the interviews. For example, London is described by one informant (M5, Harrow, Greater London) as a "relatively dangerous" place, where "you would talk to people you don't know, but you have to kind of keep your wit especially if it's dark". According to the informant from Liverpool (M6, Liverpool, Merseyside) "there's a bit of vandalism…" in Liverpool, but he also adds that the same

problem exists in all big cities in England. Such accounts deliver a more realistic picture of English cities. Similar characteristics of a metropolitan atmosphere are also described in the textbooks examined, but to a lesser extent, in a more indirect way and only in reference to London. In the chapter *Animals at work* (*SM1*, 25), a police constable "who works for the London Police" says that in his job, his horse "must get used to heavy traffic, noisy demonstrations, football matches and even riots" and "be big enough and strong enough to stand the life in the city". Including an example of ordinary people, even if from the point of view of a police officer, as in the example above, is a natural way to describe a city. Even if it is hard to say whether the example above is from real life, the accompanying picture of a police officer adds to the feeling of authenticity.

Other metropolitan characteristics are represented for example when the informant from Manchester (example 34 below) describes her city and its atmosphere as "cosmopolitan", referring to the mixture of people and cultures characteristic of many big cities nowadays. Another example from Northwest London (example 35 below) illustrates how a person brought up in a multicultural city can be influenced by many different cultures. In addition, some other examples from the same informant demonstrate how the richness in cultures and religions can also show in various ways of spending leisure time, as well as slang that has mixed different elements and influences.

> 34. Many different cultures, people from Ireland, West-Indian culture, Indian and Asian culture, but obviously a lot of white people as well. (F1, Manchester, Greater Manchester)
>
> 35. Personally, I was brought up in a prominently Indian area and then I went to a predominantly Jewish school. (M5, Harrow, Greater London)

While informants coming from big multicultural cities tend to describe the mixture of cultures and religions as a natural part of the city life, an informant (F5, Radlett, Hertfordshire) originating from a village also describes the tension between two different religious groups in her home village. This shows that multiculturalism is not restricted to urban communities and that it does not come without its challenges. On the other hand, there are also local communities which are

more homogenous in terms of ethnicities. The informant (F9) from Stroud, Gloucestershire says that in her town there are few ethnic minorities and the population is predominantly white.

As for the state of living, some primarily metropolitan tendencies can be recognised, such as long working hours and commuting to work (example 36), in contrast to the slower pace of life described for example by the informant (F6) from Somerset/Devon. Some examples illustrate how the way of living can vary inside a big city (example 37).

> 36. They work very long hours. It takes them a long time to get to work and back. Usually over an hour each way. So most people spend two and half hours commuting to work and back. Most people work in Central London, and if they live in the suburbs, then it takes a long time. So most of people's day is spent at work or travelling to and from work. (M5, Harrow, Greater London)

> 37. …quite open and lively, but there's a bit of divide between North and South Chingford in terms of maybe income, it's a bit more developed in North Chingford, a bit more suburban and in South Chingford it was more built up. (M7, Chingford, Greater London)

In Manchester there is also a similar divide in income and way of living (example 38), but the other way round:

> 38. …South Manchester is a bit more affluent, people have a bit more money (F1, Manchester, Greater Manchester).

In big cities such division is probably more striking than in smaller places. The informant says that as a child she lived in North Manchester, and that it was during her university time and after university that she lived in South Manchester. Thus, her identity in terms of lifestyle is probably mixed, as it has been influenced by two different atmospheres, even if in the same city. The class division may result in people leading very different lives, having different lifestyles, experiences, realities, and as a result: different local identities. According to the informant from Northwest London (M5, Harrow, Greater London), there are rich and poor areas all around London as well as different religious communities.

In contrast to big chains, at least in some areas there prevails a tendency to buy from local producers and businesses, as the following example (39) illustrates:

> 39. A lot of people shop in a local bookshop rather than WH Smith or Waterstones. And we have our own farmer's market…most people buy their food and vegetables there instead of like Tesco's or some big supermarket. Not everyone but quite a few. (F9, Stroud, Gloucestershire)

Local products are a part of the local identity. The preference for a local producer over national chains could simply mean a preference for local flavours and a sense of home, but it can also be interpreted as a willingness to support local work and make the local community and its 'we-spirit' stronger.

Some informants point out that there are differences between generations, for example, in terms of their relation to nature, which shows in their lifestyles (example 40):

> 40. …one of them would go rabbiting/hunting…more old-fashioned way of life; my parents' generation probably more in touch [with the nature] than my generation (M3, Chesterfied, Derbyshire)

In general, this can be seen as a sign of a change in local identities from one generation to the next. In the interviews it also becomes clear that often the lifestyle and activities can be dependant on the age of the people. Another such aspect naturally is gender.

An informant from Seaton in Cumbria (M8, Seaton, Cumbria) describes the atmosphere in his local area as northern as opposed to the rest of the country, at the same time, however, making a distinction between the countryside and the busy metropolitan cities of the North and mentioning Manchester as an example. He describes the atmosphere and people in his local area as "relaxed" and "hard-working" and refers to the farming community. In contrast, the informant from Manchester (example 41) sees the wide range of cultural activities characteristic of the city and as a creator of a nice atmosphere.

> 41. I think it's a very positive area to live in. As I said there's lots to do so if you're interested in art, there's music and galleries, if you're

> interested in shopping, you can go to all the major shops there, in sports. The cultural opportunities are massive, which is I think you get that in a lot of big cities.…(F1, Manchester, Greater Manchester)

On the other hand, some informants describe their hometown as a place where there is "not much going on" (M9, Haywards Heath, West Sussex) and highlight the residential area character of their hometown ("Nice place for families to live", ibid.) and the fact that because of good railway connections the towns work as a transit for other people commuting to work in larger cities ("People use it to get a train to London or down to Brighton", ibid.). This would seem to be the case in many places in West Sussex in general, as at the county level another informant (F2, Washington, West Sussex) mentions that in West Sussex there are small towns and many people commute to London.

Naturally, the lifestyle can be seen from different perspectives. There are places which might not have any distinctive characteristics, which can make them less attractive as places to live for some people (example 42).

> 42. I heard somewhere it was ranked as being like an unpleasant place to live. It was I think the second most generic city in the UK. It's like there's nothing special about it. It's typical England as a whole. And I can kind of agree with that. You know, I've never heard somebody visiting Reading for anything other than work. People don't wanna go to day trip to Reading, whereas they would do somewhere like Exeter, for example. (M1, Reading, Berkshire)

It is important to point out that despite statistics, the personal experience of the residents can be positive. For example, the informant from Reading expresses this by saying that living in Reading is fine and that "there are poorer places", and that there are "lots of cool buildings and everything" in Reading (M1, Reading, Berkshire). Similarly, the informant from Hull also talks about national statistics in the light of which Hull would not be a desirable place to live, but at the same time she seems to be very proud of her own local town and area. It is important for pupils to learn about local cultures and become aware of such experiences and the local point of view, in order to be able to avoid creating situations where the local people feel that there is already prejudice against them.

One of the reasons for not a particularly strong local culture could be the closeness to a metropolis such as London (example 43):

> 43. When you live so close to London, everything just kind of gets sucked in, we're like a periphery. (M1, Reading, Berkshire)

The example below also shows how a relatively big town can have community feeling (example 44). In another example, the way of living is described as simple and family-oriented (example 45), and the informant sees the area as prominently working class, creating a link between class and people's values, which he describes as being the result of upbringing.

> 44. I'm from Hull in East-Yorkshire. The city, Hull is a city I think there's 250 000 the population, something like this. So it's quite big, but everyone, it's quite small in like its atmosphere like people tend to know each other. (F8, Hull, East Yorkshire)

> 45. I think it's fairly, I'd say simple. It's not…in the sense…I think most people just generally go to work and then go home to their family. It's quite a working class, poor area of England so many people would sort of have quite close family values because that's how they were brought up. I think there's a very working class sort of atmosphere and way of life in the sense. Men sort of go to work nine to five and then maybe go pub for an hour and then go home, or something like that. (M6, Liverpool, Merseyside)

By contrast, an interviewee from Sidmouth reports on two very different lifestyles depending on class (example 46).

> 46. You have the rich people who move there to die. And then you have the ordinary people who were born and raised there. (M4, Sidmouth, Devon)

A feeling that there is a strong class division in lifestyles may produce resentment associated with the local identity and a stronger willingness to identify oneself with another place, as in the case of this informant.

In summary, even if the textbooks examined and the interview data share some similarities in the way they picture the atmosphere in a metropolitan city, for example, multiculturalism as a defining characteristic of London and Manchester only becomes clear in the informants' accounts.

Both types of data succeed in delivering a seemingly realistic image of the city life by also describing some of its negatives. In addition, however, the representations in the interview data show a class division and significant differences in local people's standards of living. Other variables mentioned by the informants are age, generation and gender. Thus, there are multiple factors that can affect the lifestyle. Compared to the textbooks, the interviews offer a deeper insight into the way of living in the countryside, as well as the original purpose and heritage of some English towns and villages, providing evidence of the way they still shape people's lives to some extent. The interviews show communities with their particular characteristics, but the informants' accounts also reveal that some towns not far away from the capital can be seen as "generic" or mainly as "residential areas" rather than having their distinctive local cultures.

4.3.5 Local traditions and food

The descriptions of local traditions in England seem lacking in the three books, as all activities and events which could be classified as traditions and annual events take place in London (*SM3*, Sights of London, 116–117). For example, one tradition supporting the touristic view, is the Changing of the Guard, described in the London chapter (ibid.) as follows: "The Changing of the Guard takes place in the forecourt of Buckingham Palace…" Another chapter includes a picture of this event (*SM1*, Animals at work, 25). The other London examples include "By the way, if the flag is flying on the mast of Buckingham Palace it means that the Queen is in residence" and "Hyde Park is famous for its Speakers' Corner, which has for centuries been the place in London where you can go and give a speech", which can be seen relevant for tourists and locals alike, however.

By contrast, it is unfortunate that an event representing multicultural London is described from a touristic point of view (*SM3*, Sights of London, 116–117): "If you have a chance to visit London at the end of August, do not miss Notting Hill Carnival. It is Europe's biggest street carnival with Caribbean bands and dancers dressed in fantastic costumes." By only describing the event as the "biggest carnival in Europe", the chance to discuss the everyday multicultural

atmosphere and background of London is missed, and multiculturalism is presented more as a curiosity. In the interview example (47) below, the reason for celebrating multiculturalism is stated more explicitly. Even if there are also other Refugee Week events in the UK, it becomes clear that this is something that is particularly characteristic of Hull. Similarly, the cosmopolitan character of Manchester and the different nationalities show in its local events (example 48).

> 47. We have a week called Refugee Week, and it's to celebrate refugees in Hull from all over the world and so, there's… it's a whole week and there'll be different shows put on by different like groups like dance or singing or Arts or anything like this. I think that's usually a week in August. (F8, Hull, East Yorkshire)
>
> 48. There's an Irish parade on St. Patrick's Day, which is in two weeks' time. They have..the Irish make their own parades and go through the city centre on a Sunday. (F1, Manchester, Greater Manchester)

The historical background in terms of vocations such as that of a fisherman can still be part of the local culture and show in its traditions and annual events (example 49):

> 49. One day a year, I don't know what day it is and if it is the same day, but it's to celebrate the fishing industry and the men, like street called Hessle Road, where all of the like fishermen and the families like lived, and there were all the shops they like have like the celebration on here, and one of the things they do is called the Pram Race, because when there was fishing, the fishermen would be out at sea and their wives go collect their money once a week what the men had done on the fishing…and so they would run down Hessle Road with the prams and go collect the money so they have a race to remember this. And, one person, usually an adult male sits on the pram and another adult man pushes him and everybody is running down the middle on the road to remember it. That's just something like silly. (F8, Hull, East Yorkshire)

As the informant from Hull also reports on a strong community feeling, it can be suggested that having continuing traditions such as this one connects people to their heritage, and it is one way for them to maintain their community spirit. An account like the one above could well be included in a textbook, as it is both informative and amusing, and thus likely to be something that pupils would remember. Another example of a way to show awareness of and appreciation for one's roots is the

tradition of brass bands near Manchester, which according to the informant is strongly related to the history of mill towns in the area (F1, Manchester, Greater Manchester). Even if the mills are gone, the people continue to meet each other and keep their community feeling strong with the help of music.

Related to the historical background and heritage, it becomes evident in the everyday life of the locals that old beliefs continue to exist (examples 50 and 51). A foreign language learner might act in an inappropriate manner causing confusion or perhaps even dislike if he or she is not aware of the beliefs and taboo subjects of the local people. Many of the traditions that the informants talk about have their origin in the history of the area. The idea of decade long traditions and community activities is to bond people. What might seem strange to a foreigner, can serve the task of enforcing the community spirit. In the agricultural areas, for example, traditions and beliefs that are connected with harvest and good luck still exist, as an example from Somerset illustrates (example 51).

50. Well, we have a few things that are related to that…like superstitions relate back to like the fishing industry. One where you should never hang out washing on a washing line on like a Tuesday or something. I don't know why, but it goes back to the fishing industry…and like, if somebody is going away, you shouldn't wave because it can bring them bad luck and all of these weird things…but that is just it was from the wives were very superstitious and the husbands..as it was like the most dangerous job, like. (F8, Hull, East Yorkshire)

51. Well there is like a local tradition I'm not sure how much people do it anymore, but…it's called wassailing. Which is basically where…It's to do with 'cause Somerset produces a lot of cider and apple. People like dance around the trees to sort of bring good luck and make sure they have a good crop of apples next year. (F6, Taunton, Somerset/Devon)

Many local events revolve around music and arts, such as the Reading Festival (M1, Reading Berkshire). An informant from Sidmouth (M4, Sidmouth, Devon) describes the annual folk festival as "the only time where the town comes life". The community spirit seems to be heightened by such events, even to the extent that they give a special reason for expatriates or people living in other parts of England or the UK to go back to their home region or city, town or village, as the examples

from Sidmouth and Northampton (examples 52 and 53) show. Memories of traditions can be of long duration (example 54).

> 52. It's the only time I like going back home because there's dancing, there's music, there's always chosen performances and everybody is happy and everybody is having a good time. (M4, Sidmouth, Devon)
>
> 53. When I moved back from Northampton, that was one of the only things that took me back, I would still go back for the balloon festival. (F10, Northampton, Northamptonshire/Milton Keynes, Buckinghamshire)
>
> 54. When I was little I used to look out my window…to see the higher balloons coming pass my window. (F10, Northampton, Northamptonshire /Milton Keynes, Buckinghamshire)

Newer traditions, for example, commemorating local people and celebrating culture include parades and festivals, such as the Manchester Day Parade, which according to an informant is to celebrate "everything that Manchester has brought to the world" (F1, Manchester, Greater Manchester). In Hull (F8, Hull, East Yorkshire), there is an annual celebration called the Freedom Festival with local music bands. The festival is held every year to commemorate William Wilberforce, "…who helped abolish slavery and was from Hull". According to the informant, "…this is probably the best way where Hull gets together as community" (ibid.).

Some of the events, such as the Glastonbury festival, are international and have less local character even if they are organised locally. As the informant puts it: ""it's pretty massive like it's not really a local fair 'cause people come from all over the world" (F6, Taunton, Somerset/Devon). In this case the locals might benefit from the event but will also need to accept the possible downsides that might come with major events like these. Similarly, there are new events, which have been launched especially to attract visitors. As an example, the informant from Somerset/Devon (F6, Taunton, Somerset/Devon) mentions the Lifeboat Week. As well as the lifeboat events, which make use of the location by the sea, some other traditions in Somerset are also very much related to nature and surroundings directly:

> 55. On New Year's Day quite a few people go swimming in the sea. It's like a local tradition. (F6, Taunton, Somerset/Devon)

In the adjacent county of Devon, this is a Boxing Day tradition (M4, Sidmouth, Devon). Swimming in the sea on Boxing Day or on New Year's Day is not distinctive of only these two counties, as it is also an established tradition in some other seaside towns in Britain. Nevertheless, it is something that is made possible by the surroundings and something that is organised locally each year.

Similarly, charity runs and walks are a national pastime nowadays, but they remain more typical of certain areas because of the surroundings. Examples in the interview data, for example, include the "Mooden Mad Race", in which the informant from Romford (F4, Romford, Greater London) living at the border of Essex and Greater London was going to participate in, and which is made possible by "lots of riverbanks" and "muddy inland". Another good example is the "Stroud Valley Walk", which according to the informant from Stroud (F9, Stroud, Gloucestershire), is very popular amidst the local people and is something that her friend has been organising as an event worker. In general, local traditions in the English countryside and its villages seem to differ significantly from traditions in more urban locations, and they create their own very special atmosphere, as illustrated by the example from Watton-at-Stone (example 56).

> 56. Yes, in my village we have a village fete..which is…everyone goes to this certain like a big field in front of our church and we sort of…have…and they put off a big tent and kind of have like different kinds of shops and loads of games like a you know throwing a thing at coconut. You know that, you know this? Maybe not. It's sort of like a fair so you have loads of coconuts upon this…any idea…and if you have a ball, you have to try to knock them, knock them off and if you do, you get to keep the coconut. …Yeah, and it kind of brings the community together and they we have horse rides for children in certain part and a big tent serving tea and coffee, and a local sort of radio station comes down and that's normally hold every year. (F7, Watton-at-Stone, Hertfordshire)

Local village events as the one described above might seem small, but they can be significant for the community feeling. In order to understand the people, it is good to be aware of local traditions such as the one above. Similarly, it can give a point of identification for Finnish pupils originating

from smaller towns and villages. The fact that a local radio station, which spreads the news about local events, is involved, shows how local media can also play a big role in reinforcing the connectedness of people in their local area. Furthermore, events in villages appear to be the joint effort of local businesses and associations and the church alike (example 57).

> 57. Old fashioned activities like the village fair that happens in the summer, which I used to love going to. It took place in the recreational ground so a big field next to a forest. All the different shops would have stands there games and different activities for children to do, you know, like having to throw something and hit it and you won a goldfish and candy floss, and there used to be a carnival every year as well and all the different kind of groups in the village, which had a float you know it's like a small…and people stand on it. I was in the Brownies and ..so we always had our own thing to do there dress up as something. And the church as well is also quite a big part in village life and different festivals to do with religion. Although I wasn't religious, all the village got involved in that as well. (F5, Radlett, Hertfordshire)

As for traditions and local events, the role of the parish seems to be particularly big in the village life. Another informant tells about a "Yuletime Market which is held around Christmas time in the local village hall" and where, to raise money, the local parish will sell "…cakes or they will have locally produced beer or ale or cider or jam" (M10, Gosbeck/Ipswich, Suffolk). On the other hand, the local people organise smaller events of their own, such as "car boot sales" (M10, Gosbeck/Ipswich, Suffolk).

While many traditions are characteristic of a particular town or village, some are shared by villages in a larger area. A good example of this is the Well Dressing tradition in the Peak District mentioned by the informant from Chesterfield (M3, Chesterfield, Derbyshire). The informant says that even if the tradition was not in his village, the decorations were something that he used to go and see with his family sometimes. This shows that 'local' does not only mean the exact city, town or village where people live. To what extent the surrounding area is part of it, depends on the person and his or her experience.

An informant (F9) from Stroud, Gloucestershire talks about a Stroud fair with local animals and a vegetable competition. Similarly, another informant's account on the Suffolk show organised in Ipswich depicts a countryside tradition (example 58). The way the event is described is very far from something that would be natural to have in a big English city. However, traditions sometimes change and, for example, what was originally mainly a country town market can later evolve into general entertainment for everybody (example 59).

58. You have various stools and there may be the option to do horse riding, look at some chickens by chickens if you want to if you want to keep them at home. That includes also other local you know other animals as well like pigs. There's also dog shows so it's kind of like a dogs doing tricks or something like that. And then they'll have like main events in like the big ring in the circle which can really vary… and that's annually. (M10, Gosbeck/Ipswich, Suffolk)

59. Apart from obviously taking part in the big national celebrations, I suppose the big local event is what's called the Roll Fair. It's basically, it was started in the 13th century, because the chart was granted so that people could trade like cattle and things like that, but over the years it's developed into a more general entertainment fair so get rides and things coming to the town. So that's the big event really. And on the first Monday of the fair, everyone gets up at five o'clock in the morning to hear the proclamation get read and all the pubs open early. It's a once a year thing. And everyone, it's…people kind of…all over the county go to it, probably just because the pubs open at 5 in the morning. (M2, Rothwell, Northamptonshire)

Some traditions have to do with local food products, such as the Gloucestershire cheese, which is used in Cheese Rolling near Stroud (example 60). Other local food mentioned by the informants include savoury pies, which according to the informant from Manchester are typical of the local food culture and also of the North, compared to the different customs of the South (example 61). As illustrated by the example, there might also be a connection between food culture and climate.

60. They roll it down. Every year..trying catch the cheese and whoever catches it, wins the cheese. (F9, Stroud, Gloucestershire)

61. There's a type of food we have called potato hash, which is a bit like a stew so it's potatoes and carrots and beef that's cut into cubes and it has like a gravy. So it's all cooked in one pan. And the people eat

> that in the winter. I think the food like that is because of the climate that is around. (F1, Manchester, Greater Manchester)

The only originally local food tradition referred to in the series *Smart Moves*, even if nowadays only connected with a particular location by its name, is the Yorkshire pudding (*SM3*, England – Bits 'n' Pieces, 115), mentioned also by the informant from East Yorkshire (F8, Hull, East Yorkshire). A similar example of something that originally comes from the area but has then spread all over England is Bakewell pudding, described by the informant from Chesterfield as a traditional product from Bakewell "which is about half an hour from where [he] grew up" (M3, Chesterfield, Derbyshire).

Many Finnish pupils might know the product Weetabix but do not know that it is an English product and where in England it comes from. The informant from Rothwell says that he lives not very far from the factory, and that Weetabix might be "…representative of the fact there's lots of wheat grown in the county" (M2, Rothwell, Northamptonshire).

As the following examples from Somerset and Devon demonstrate (examples 62 and 63), as for food culture in particular, the county borders are seldom strict and similar food can be found in adjacent counties:

> 62. Cheddar cheese is from Somerset 'cause there's a valley called Cheddar Gorge. I suppose, cliché thing, pastis, what else Somerset… cream teas, but I mean apart from the cider...a lot of people in Somerset do drink a lot of cider. But the cream tea and pastis, a lot of places do serve it…(F6, Thornton, Somerset/Devon)

> 63. We have…there's this bit about Devon cream teas, because you know, tea is obviously a very big part the English way of life and we have this Devonshire clotted cream, which we eat with jam and scones, and we put the cream in the tea as well and we drink that. (M4, Sidmouth, Devon)

Even if the informants do not mention it, there exists another version of the cream tea in Cornwall. Sometimes there can be a strong rivalry when local people proud of their local area are trying to

prove that their version of the tradition is the best. The battle can be a passionate one (see BBC Local, 2010).

In another example the informant from Devon talks about the historical background of traditional local food (example 64). On the other hand, however, many interviewees say that there is no distinctive local food culture in their area (example 65).

> 64. Food is pastis. I think they're a bit like these Finnish meat pockets, but they're so much better. They're filled with potatoes, minced beef, onions, and they are eaten everywhere. I think they originally come from when people who used to work in tin mines needed to keep their meat in some form of container and they wrapped in this hard pastry and then over time it's evolved into, you eat the whole thing. (M4, Sidmouth, Devon)

> 65. I don't know if there are really, to be honest, but then England, I don't know if there are really any specialities, you know, anywhere in England. We're kind of one of those countries that steals everybody else's food and makes it our own. (F4, Romford, Greater London)

The traditional food can also be something that is eaten all over England, but which is locally produced. An informant from Hertfordshire (F5, Radlett, Hertfordshire) mentions pub food as an example of something that in a "pub in the middle of nowhere in the countryside" can be particularly good as it is likely to be "freshly cooked" (F5, Radlett, Hertfordshire). The freshness can be guaranteed by a location by the sea, for example, as told by the informant from Hull (F8, Hull, East Yorkshire) as well as by the informant from Ipswich (M10, Gosbeck/Ipswich, Suffolk), who mentions Aldeburgh, a seaside town in his county, which according to him is famous for its fish and chips. On the other hand, the informant from Croydon (F3, Croydon, Greater London) praises the Indian cuisine in her local area.

There can also be local traditions on national celebrations. A good example of this are the events of the Royal Family, such as the Diamond Jubilee a few years ago, an event which was also celebrated locally and thus reinforced the community feeling in many places in the UK. The celebrations "brought the community together", as is told by the informant from Ipwich, who also

adds that "it can be quite rare really when the whole community is coming together, maybe that's once in a year, twice a year" (M10, Gosbeck/Ipswich, Suffolk). Similarly, there are national annual events, such as the Harvest Festival, which was reported on, for example, by the informant from Sidmouth (M4, Sidmouth, Devon) as well as in the following account on Radlett (example 66).

> 66. Something else which I haven't thought about. I just remembered this…we used to have a collection, I'm not sure when it took place, of food and things, and we used to put them in a shoe box. Every child had to bring a shoe box and contribute some things to put in there from their family for people who did not have so much many or to elderly people. Harvest festival, I think it was Harvest festival. (F5, Radlett, Hertfordshire)

The example above can be seen as a yet another example of personal memories related to traditions. On the other hand, there are some national celebrations that might not be participated in locally. In Liverpool, for example, the informant (M6, Liverpool, Merseyside) says that St George's Day is less celebrated in Liverpool because of a significant Irish population. In other words, the local community can choose which national celebrations fit their community the best, showing awareness of and respect for, for example, variation in ethnic backgrounds.

To summarise, while the textbook series *Smart Moves* mainly provides descriptions of traditions in London, those of a touristic type and interest, the interviews turn out be a good source for learning more about a wide range of local traditions in cities, towns and villages. The traditions reflect the local communities in many ways: their heritage and the way it still shows in local beliefs, ethnicities, nature and surroundings. Some cities in Northern England seem to have a particularly strong sense of community. In addition, many villages want to maintain their community feeling by organising all kinds of small events, in the organisation of which the parishes also play a big role. Food culture was not found particularly distinctive locally, even if the informants report on some local specialities.

4.3.6 Sports and leisure time

Local traditions partly overlap with other categories, such as sports and leisure time. Football seems to be a popular sport and a leisure time activity both nationwide as well as locally. Football is present in the textbooks, for example, in the chapter *Hobbies unite* (*SM1*, 38–39) about two boys living in London, including the references: "football matches", "Arsenal", "all their home matches", "practice regularly at their local football club", "five-a-side match", "football practice".

> Several of England's best football teams come from London. Chelsea, Arsenal, Fulham, Tottenham Hotspur, Watford as well as West Ham all play in the Premier League. (*SM3*, Sights of London, 116–117)

Apart from London, the book series associates other cities, towns or villages with football when presenting football as the local favourite sport in Norwich (*SM1*, Friendship across the sea, 66–69), mentioning "sports grounds and a great football team". Additionally, in both chapters, there are pictures of footballs and football teams, such as, in the latter chapter, a picture of the local team Norwich versus Sheffield United. The Reader chapter on Billy Elliot (*SM3*, 125) mentions "Newcastle United strip".

Unfortunately, these occurrences are isolated and remain without further explanations. The interviews reveal that there are English cities, for example, Manchester and Liverpool, where football is an inherent part of the local culture, meaning that the majority of people either play or watch football. An example from Liverpool (example 67) shows that football is well rooted in the weekly life of local people of different ages.

> 67. I'd say men mainly sports I think there's a big football..especially in Liverpool, but my dad is 55 and he still plays football on a Saturday with all his friends. And then…he plays sports is big in Liverpool and if people don't play sports, usually they go watch sports in a sense like on a Saturday, mainly people will work during the week and on a Saturday they go watch football. (M6, Liverpool, Merseyside)

In the example above, the informant notes that these are sports traditions of the local male residents. In other words, there might be gender differences in the preferred sports or in the popularity of sports as a hobby in general. However, there seems to be a connection of pubs and sports, especially football in many places in England. The pub has become almost like a homelike place, where plenty of time is spent (example 68).

> 68. Football, pubs. Quite often centred around the pubs so even football even as a kid I would go and get changed in one of the local pubs, you know, where they had this small kind of room that was used to get changed and yeah, after football you know people would then go to the pub afterwards, and they would cook food on for the away team as well as the home team so you go back to pub every time you play a match against someone. Is very much kind of football really with the people that I was going up with. (M3, Chesterfield, Derbyshire)

Even if a city can stereotypically be associated with a certain sport, such as football, the informant from Manchester reports on strong traditions on cricket and rugby as well. In some areas and especially in villages, rugby and cricket seem to have long traditions and be even more popular than football (example 69).

> 69. Cricket and rugby are really big in the village I grew up specifically. Not so much football actually. And have a long tradition going back over 100 years or something where the old cricket green was and the rugby fields and that's quite community oriented as well. I know that I'd go with my dad to watch rugby and my brother played in a cricket team. I know the village is quite big, but you would know other people and their families and where they came from. In terms of the county as a whole I think football's quite big….(F5, Radlett, Hertfordshire)

The informant from Rothwell also says that in his local area cricket is practically played in every village, as they all have got their own teams (M2, Rothwell, Northamptonshire).

The selection of sports and other leisure activities can be related to the class division as well, as the following interview examples (70 and 71) suggest:

> 70. Mainly football, because it's such a working class area and in England football is the working class sport. There's cricket a lot of people play cricket in the summer. clubs around the city and in the

> suburbs. around places like Wigan rugby league and there's a lot of rugby in the area as well, especially in public schools schools you have to pay for they play rugby and cricket. (M6, Liverpool, Merseyside)

71. Again there's this class division between sports the rich people tend to play bowls, crocket and go swimming, whereas the poor people play football, rugby and …there sorts of things…Oh and of course, cricket. (M4, Sidmouth, Devon)

Interestingly, the sports favoured by the richer people in Sidmouth would seem to differ from those seen as distinguished sports in some other English towns. However, it should be noted again that the sample in this study is small. In any case, as the informant from Sidmouth says that rich, elderly residents are typical of the area, it might be suggested that age is possibly another factor which can show as variation in preferences. In *Smart Moves*, there is only one inexplicit hint on the class division when the Eton College is told to have its own activities, such as "sports and music" and the perhaps more distinguished "rowing, cricket and tennis" (*SM2*, Worlds apart, 58).

What the books also seem to lack is the importance of sports in the formation of people's local identities, for example, by the means of comparison and rivalry. This can be between two towns (example 72). If the local town has two teams, there can also be rivalry inside the town (example 73). The town can be divided into two also geographically (example 74).

72. There's a bit of a rivalry also between the town Workington and the town called Whitehaven. That runs through everything, including sport. (M8, Seaton, Cumbria)

73. There's a lot of rivalry by people in the community. Which is good, although I'm a Manchester United fan so I would rather that City doesn't do well. (F1, Manchester, Greater Manchester)

74. In the north of England, they really like rugby league so it's a different type of rugby what you usually see, and in Hull we actually have two teams here in top league Hull FC and Hull KA. Everybody in West Hull supports Hull FC, and everybody in East Hull supports Hull KA, a bit like the ice hockey here I guess, and then the rivalry is like really intense. (F8, Hull, East Yorkshire)

To give an example of the seriousness of the rivalry, the informant from Hull also mentions an incident where his brother was kicked out of a taxi when the taxi driver found out that he supported a different team to himself.

In addition to the more national types of sports, some local communities have developed their own sports game traditions and activities (example 75). The textbook series does not include such descriptions of distinctively local sports.

> 75. There's also in Workington a sport called Uppies and Downies. The people from the upper part of Workington playing the sport against the downie people of Workington, which would probably include Seaton, I think, that's how it is. So every, I think there's like two nights that they do it and I can't remember when exactly in the year that they have this like ball…And it's very rough…the ball gets hoisted in the air and you have to get it and take it to a certain part in the town. (M8, Seaton, Cumbria)

Despite its roughness, the game seems to be something that unites the local community. Even if sports events appear to be popular in many places, an informant from Croydon (F3, Croydon, Greater London), for example, reports on both a lack of sporting events as well as a lack of a community feeling. Such experiences are of course subjective, but as many other informants clearly seem to find that sports connect people, this might suggest that there exists a link between sports events and a stronger community feeling.

Other sports activities in London mentioned in the textbook series examined include aerobics class and golf (*SM1*, Hobbies unite, 39). The Reader chapter on *Billy Elliot* (*SM3*, 125) gives a historical, even if a fictional perspective on local leisure time by stating that "In the same village hall as his boxing club is the girls' ballet class…" and mentioning the "Royal Ballet School in London".

The informant from Manchester (F1, Manchester, Greater Manchester) also mentions the support of the town or government for sports and the different possibilities it has created for local sports. She says that this has been the case after some big sports venues, including the "Velodrome cycle track" and a "national squash centre", had been built for the Commonwealth Games

Manchester hosted in 2002. According to her, the British government would like to see local people continue to use the venues that were built with a lot of money. This example illustrates how local but also national politics play a major role in the organisation of leisure activities for the local people as well. However, the interviews also demonstrate that not everybody is interested in the sports supported the most financially or found popular at the national or local level. Some people might prefer individual sports over the popular team sports played in the area. The informants from Seaton (M8) and Rothwell (M2) give examples of activities that seem to be closely related to the nature in their home regions, including fishing, hiking, cycling and mountain biking.

All in all, the description of Norwich (*SM1*, Friendship across the sea, 65) proves again to be one of the most comprehensive ones in the textbook series *Smart Moves*, mentioning that in Norwich the leisure time activities range from sports to "cinemas with good films, theatres…", and that it has got "lots of museums, some art galleries and concert halls", "a dry ski slope", and that Norwich is "famous for its pubs and churches". It also shows pictures of "swans on river Wensum", as already mentioned above, and "Norwich by night" (ibid.). In a similar way, some informants talk about the way the people make use of their various cultural and entertainment possibilities locally (example 76):

> 76. There's massive shopping centres in Manchester. You've got the city centre itself. Which has a lot of major shops. There's a place called the Traffic Centre, which is a little bit further out of the town, but it has like Harvey Nicholson and Selfridges, it's a bit like ..Bluewater in London so it's all undercover, and people drive there, park for free and just spend the day shopping. You've got pubs and clubs and nightlife and theatres and cinemas so I think it has the second biggest amount of theatres outside of London in Manchester, and then, there's as I say museums and galleries so they are not just in the city centre. There's some that are in..there's an area called Salford Quays, which is where the BBC has moved all their work to, and they have galleries and museums there, and that's near to where Manchester United is so you don't have to just be in the city centre to, to be able to have a good social time, you can go to different areas and still find lots of things to do. (F1, Manchester, Greater Manchester)

As for leisure activities, the London chapter (*SM3*, Sights of London, 116–117) unsurprisingly describes the different opportunities for a tourist in detail: "London is a city of museums"; "Piccadilly Circus has theatres, shopping arcades and entertainment centres around it"; "To really get a bird's eye view of London, you have to ride the London Eye" and "When shopping in London, do not forget to visit England's most famous department store, Harrods". Even if some of these activities might make up part of a Londoner's free time, unfortunately their relation to the everyday life of the locals remains unclear, as no comments of the local people are provided. The following example, however, shows how pupils are given a chance to learn something about leisure time activities from Londoners' point of view as well:

> There are a lot of parks in London. In central London there are five Royal Parks. Green Park, St. James Park, Hyde Park, Kensington Gardens and Regent's Park allow visitors and Londoners alike some time off. (*SM3*, Sights of London, 116–117)

The proximity of bigger towns can attract people living in villages and surrounded by the countryside and invite them to spend their leisure time in the city, exploring its various possibilities (example 77). On the other hand, in towns there are more options for local entertainment and leisure at hand, such as a shopping centre and a theatre (example 78).

77. We'd get on the bus and go to the bigger towns to visit a shopping centre or go to a cinema. I mean there wasn't really a much to do to be honest, because you don't really appreciate things when you're a teenager like I should have really spent more time in the village..explore the countryside and things, but then you know, when you are a teenager you don't want to do those kinds of things, but I think it was the older generation who did that. Also being really quite lucky being so close to London to get on the train and be in 20 minutes to Kings' Cross so a lot of the time we just went on the train to London and just hung around in London and went out to nightclubs in London and went shopping there. (F5, Radlett, Hertfordshire)

78. We've got like a new development…shopping centre so I guess people go there. And…we have like a theatre called Hull it has like lots of local play, but also big ones so I guess, quite a lot of people are involved in like drama and music in Hull. And then sports for some people. (F8, Hull, East Yorkshire)

Following the division of the interview questions, the textbooks were also examined for social and community activities. The Norwich chapter (*SM1*, Friendship across the sea, 68–69) mentions, for example, the local football club and includes a picture of Norwich Cathedral. In addition, pub culture is being referred to in the comment "They say that there is a pub for every day of the year and a church for every Sunday of the year" (ibid.). The informants' descriptions of the pub culture confirm this (examples 79 and 80), even if the informant from Liverpool also mentions theatre as an example of various cultural activities.

> 79. …in their freetime it sounds bad but a lot of people go to pub just to have a drink or relax. (M6, Liverpool, Merseyside)
>
> 80. ….the kind of recreational side of things would be centred around the pub and like working men's clubs and things like. (M3, Chesterfield, Derbyshire)

The leisure and community activities, as well as popular meeting places differ according to class (example 81) and age (example 82):

> 81. They go out in their full fox-hunting gear with their horses and their hounds, and rather than let the hounds kill the foxes they shoot it and they tend to go walking or go and have coffee. This is generally the richer people. The poor people just work and drink a lot of cider in their spare time and have barbeques and parties, but it's very much class division between what you do in your spare time and what you don't. (M4, Sidmouth, Devon)
>
> 82. For the older generation, they meet at the social hall or the social clubs or in cricket club, the rugby club, or they meet in coffee shops and then the younger people will meet wherever they can, because …of money they tend to just meet in the park or at people's houses. (M4, Sidmouth, Devon)

Parks, friends' homes and the city centre are also mentioned by other informants as popular places for young people to meet and gather. Naturally, leisure activities usually include the "dinner table", "watching TV" and "travel" as well, as in the chapter about a family in Swindon (*SM1*, A trip to France, 43) and in the accounts of some informants. Providing such information is equally important, as it gives the Finnish pupils a clear point of identification.

In summary, sports seem to play a major role in the daily life and leisure time of many people from different parts of England. The image given in the textbook series of football as one of the national sports is not contradicted by the interview data, but it is supplemented by bringing the discussion to a more local level. The popularity of football and other, competing sports, such as rugby and cricket was found to depend on the community, and the choice remains somewhat class-based even today. The role of football, other sports and the related phenomenon of rivalry as creators of a community feeling and their connection to pub culture becomes evident in the interview examples. Some people living in small villages tend to travel to cities for leisure activities, but the informants also report on a variety of clubs and societies as well as theatre and activities related to music that are offered locally. Regarding other sports and leisure activities, the informants talk about a significantly wider range of activities than the textbooks, apart from one chapter on Norwich, which would already seem to offer quite a comprehensive description of leisure time in the city.

4.3.7 Other aspects of the everyday life

In the textbook series *Smart Moves*, it is not possible to find many items related to work and education in England. As for work, *Animals at Work* (*SM1*, 25) shows a police officer in London, who says that "the mounted police is one of the best jobs in the world" (ibid.). In the chapter *Hobbies unite* (*SM1*, 38), football star and sports journalist are the dream jobs of two boys who live in London. The chapter *A trip to France* (*SM1*, 43) introduces the mother of the family as 'Joyce Clarkson, housewife' and the father as "George Clarkson, engineer". The family lives in Swindon. In the chapter on *Billy Elliot* in *SM3* (Reader, 125), a "miners' strike" is mentioned. Apart from the mounted police, the other professions mentioned seem to be the general type and not as clearly related to a particular location, even if it is probably more common to be a football star or a sports journalist in a bigger town than in a little village. Many of the occupations mentioned by the

informants are also of the general type, but some are more related to the surrounding nature (example 83):

> 83. I think the biggest employer is the meteorology, the MetOffice for the weather or they collect all the data and analyse the weather in Exeter. (M4, Sidmouth, Devon)

One informant also comments that some bigger enterprises have their headquarters in the North because of cheaper workforce, but on the other hand some informants talk about big companies that prefer to have their premises in Greater London. In general, there seem to be rather big businesses in different parts of England. However, this is not always the case, and some informants say that because of a lack of prospects in the local area, many young people decide to move away (example 84):

> 84. It's not a place where young people tend to stay. There's opportunities in retail and in nursing home or farming, but apart from that there's no opportunities for decent employment and a nice wages, it's very, very you tend to just get by if you don't have money. (M4, Sidmouth, Devon)

Knowing that one will eventually be forced to leave the area might have an effect on the feeling of belongingness. In contrast, the informant from Northwest London says that in London there is a great range of employers from service jobs to factories, mentioning especially the banks as big employers in the capital.

Education in England is little discussed in the textbook series *Smart Moves*, and there are not many references to different locations and types of education. The boys in the *Hobbies unite* chapter (*SM1*, 38) "first met at school in South East London". In the chapter on two pen pals, the one living in Norwich refers to local education by stating "we have a university" (*SM1*, Friendship across the sea, 69), thus giving the information that Norwich is a university city. Similarly, in a chapter about a Scottish writer (SM3, Murder in Mind – an interview with a crime writer, 108), it is said that "She was educated in Oxford" and "…get into Oxford at 16…" Other examples include half a chapter on Eton College in Eton, "a private boarding school for boys only – no girls are allowed" and "a really

old school', combining it with future career perspectives by saying that "Eton has produced great men in politics, for example" (*SM2*, Worlds apart, 58). A special type of education in London is mentioned in the screenplay of *Billy Elliot* (*SM3*, Reader, 125): "Royal Ballet School in London". More attention should be paid to choosing people with different professions outside of London as well, and other examples of education than only the Eton College (*SM2*, Worlds apart, 58), the peculiar choice of which Kane (1991, see 2.4) suggests is solely owing to a "wish to preserve certain cultural images (heterostereotypes) of the foreign country", in this case the elite schools. Boarding schools are rarely mentioned in the interviews.

The interviews give a picture of no great differences in terms of how education is arranged in the country. Instead, the informants highlight the differences in the quality of education in public schools versus state schools and also, for example, between two state schools in the area, some informants having had better and some worse experiences. In general, there often seems to be both good schools and schools with a not so good reputation in the same area. Some informants travelled elsewhere to go to a better school but many also stayed in their local neighbourhood. For example, the informant from Croydon (F3, Croydon, Greater London) highlights the bad reputation of the state schools in her area. The striking difference in terms of people's income in different parts of a town is also evident in schooling (example 85):

> 85. I suppose like the education…I went to a normal state school, whereas if you're in the south of Manchester, there's more public schools, where you paid to go and so your education is generally better, because the class sizes are smaller and you have a better quality of teaching there. (F1, Manchester, Greater Manchester)

In addition, many informants talk about the higher education possibilities in their former home regions, many of them giving the impression that they are generally relatively good, even though they themselves decided to opt for studies elsewhere in England for various reasons.

Expressions describing transport in English towns and cities include the means of transport listed by a police officer in London (*SM1*, Animals at work, 25), such as "on foot", "patrol car",

"police horse", as well as by the boys in London (*SM1*, Hobbies unite, 38), whose parents "pick them up" implying that they travel by car. The chapter *A trip to France* lists ferry, boat, plane, Eurostar, and the "train from Swindon to London" (*SM1*, 44). This chapter also shows pictures with the captions "by coach" and "by tram" of which the first one is recognisably from Britain, as there is a "Stagecoach" in the picture (*SM1*, 42), even if it is a picture of a bus and not of the long-distance bus typically thought of when speaking of a 'coach'. Compared to other ways of travelling, the Eurostar train gets a lot of attention: "Eurostar gets you there quicker" (*SM1*, A trip to France, 44), "Eurostar – passenger rail travel from London to Paris" (*SM1*, Normandy – here we come!, 46), "There's the Eurostar. What a long train! Wow! Which is our carriage…." (*SM1*, Normandy – here we come!, 47), "On the Eurostar" (*SM1*, Normandy – here we come!, 49). Furthermore, the Channel Tunnel is mentioned in both of the chapters. While the chapter *A trip to France* (*SM1*, 42) includes an extremely simplified but illustrative map with the family's travel route from Swindon via London and Folkestone to France, the next chapter *Normandy – here we come!* (*SM1*, 48) gives detailed information on the history and features of the Channel. Additionally, the latter chapter mentions the Waterloo Station (*SM1*, 46–48) as the departure point for the Eurostar train in London. It is good that international connections between England and France are introduced in the textbooks. However, it is likely that there are many people in England who have never even heard of the Eurostar, not to mention having used it themselves. It is unfortunate that a chance to elaborate on the English cities and towns mentioned in the texts, such as Swindon and Folkestone, similarly to the locations on the other side of the Channel, is missed and no additional information is given.

London as a metropolitan city seems to dominate the description of transport as well. The chapter dedicated to London, *Sights of London* (*SM3*, 116–117) already offers in its title a rather touristic view of London. Nevertheless, expressions, such as "Over three million people use the Tube every day" give a better insight into the everyday life of a Londoner. In the same chapter, information is given on transport in historical London:

> Right next to the Tower is Tower Bridge, another symbol of London. The bridge was opened in 1894 and has sophisticated engineering, which opens the middle portion of the bridge so that tall ships can sail through. (ibid.)

In addition to the general lack of information on life in villages, no information is given on transport in the English countryside or generally the everyday type of transport elsewhere than in London. As for London, the only example given is the Underground, even if many Londoners walk to work, cycle or drive a car. The informants talk about both the local transport and connections to other cities, towns and villages. While the public transport in English towns and especially in big cities would seem good (example 86), in villages the reality is very different, as people living there tend to have less regular bus services (example 87).

> 86. Bus connections to other parts of London at least to the close area then there was also a train station. It had good connections, it was just missing the Underground, really, but you could get the train or bus to nearby Waltham Stone and from there you can get the Underground to Central London. (M7, Chingford, Greater London)

> 87. If you want to go and see somebody that lives in a tiny village you tend to have to get the bus nearer to it and then walk up to an hour. (M4, Sidmouth, Devon)

On the other hand, living in Greater London does not necessarily mean sufficient local bus services either, as reported by the informant from Croydon (F3, Croydon, Greater London), who says that there are no local buses later in the evening and that taking a night bus or walking is not safe. The informant from Rothwell (M2, Rothwell, Northamptonshire) says that people make use of the transport links to London and other towns and adds that:

> 88. Given that the county is quite central, the road links are so good. (M2, Rothwell, Northamptonshire)

On the other hand, the informant from near Washington in West-Sussex (F2, Washington, West Sussex) comments that if she had stayed where she was originally living, it would have probably

meant getting a driver's licence at the age of 17, as the public transport is very weak in the rural area. Similarly, a car seems to be a necessity in Somerset as well (F6, Taunton, Somerset/Devon).

Compared to transport, the English housing is covered less in the *Smart Moves* series. In the chapter *All in the family* (SM1, 29), when referring to the main character's sister and her husband, it is said that "they bought a house here in Reading". This might imply that Reading is possibly a popular town for living. Apart from Reading, Norwich is the only city mentioned in reference to residential areas and living: "I'll enclose a few pictures of Norwich and of our house so you can see what some of our houses are like" (*SM1*, Friendship across the sea, 69). A case of its own is the Eton College accommodation as a "boarding school" with "study-bedrooms" (*SM2*, Worlds apart, 58). Even if the textbooks explicitly say very little about housing in England, they present the different types of housing in a separate section for housing vocabulary in the *Help Pages* (*SM3*, 101) of each book, ranging from a cottage and farmhouse to bungalow, semi-detached house, terraced house and detached house. This information is not localised, however. The informants only mention some minor tendencies in terms of typical housing in the area, depending on whether it is a village or a town or a city. However, there can be striking differences inside a city because of the different levels of income (example 89). According to the informant from Northwest London (M5, Harrow, Greater London), housing is much more expensive in London than anywhere else in England.

> 89. In North Chingford you had bungalows, a few terraced houses, and mostly there were semi-detached. In South Chingford, you used to have blocks of flats and council states so council built housing. The housing quality was significantly lower in that part, but then again in North Chingford you had even some detached houses…(M7, Chingford, Greater London)

Local political debates are not explicitly being referred to, but in a few cases it can be interpreted that the things mentioned are problems and things to be developed, such as, "heavy traffic, noisy demonstrations" (*SM1*, Animals at work, 25), "even riots" (ibid.). In *SM3*, among the real headlines on page 124, at the end of the chapter *News through different eyes*, there is also an

example of a terrorist attack in London: “Another IRA bomb in London”. This and some other headlines occur very surprisingly after a fictional newspaper story about a political scandal, instead of providing a real life example of newspaper stories. As for local politics, including information on the Houses of Parliament in the London chapter (*SM3*, Sights of London, 116–117) can be justified by the central and very public role of the Houses of Parliament played in the political sphere of London, even if with the touristic escapes: “The Houses of Parliament is the meeting place for both the seats of Parliament, the House of Commons and the House of Lords. You may even go in to watch a debate when Parliament is in session.” The informants observe some tendencies in terms of major parties in certain areas, which mainly shows the interconnectedness of the local history and heritage, for example, that of mill towns and the popularity of the Labour Party. On the other hand, however, one informant reports on a conservative party dominance in an area of smaller incomes. Sometimes a typically working class area might belong to an area held by the conservatives, but the people would generally vote for the Labour. The Green Party also seems to be strong in certain areas, for example, in Stroud in Gloucestershire (F9, Stroud, Gloucestershire), where they are trying to make the town as “green” as possible. An informant from Ipswich (M10, Gosbeck/Ipswich, Suffolk) says that there is a recent tendency of wanting to get the local communities more involved in local politics. On the other hand, for example, the informant from Sidmouth (M4, Sidmouth, Devon) talks about a general lack of interest in politics in the area.

According to the informants, the local debates include discussions of the following: school places (M7, Chingford, Greater London), keeping the local hospital (M9, Haywards Heath, West Sussex), immigration (F8, Hull, East Yorkshire), better transport and internet connections in the rural areas (Gosbeck/Ipswich, Suffolk), job security (M6, Liverpool, Merseyside), youth unemployment (F1, Manchester, Greater Manchester), immigration and crime (M5, Harrow, Greater London), saving an old Roman road from lorry traffic (F5, Radlett, Hertfordshire), developing the local railway station (M1, Reading, Berkshire), building windfarms (M2, Rothwell,

Northamptonshire and F7, Watton-at-Stone, Hertfordshire), returning foxhunting (M4, Sidmouth, Devon), renovating the canal (F9, Stroud, Gloucestershire), EU regulations on farming (F6, Taunton, Somerset/Devon), chopping down trees and selling land for housing development (F2, Washington, West Sussex). On the basis of the range of topics discussed locally, it would seem that there is a division between more urban and more rural debates.

To sum up, even if no major local differences are found in work and education in terms of how this part of the daily life is organised in different parts of England, some professions are perhaps more typical of certain areas with long traditions in particular industries. Concerning education, it would seem that there are both schools classed as "better schools" and schools which are perhaps not valued as much in the eyes of the local people, and both types of schools can be situated very close to each other. Sometimes a decision to send the child to a particular school means travelling, mostly within the same county, however. The exceptional Eton public school lifestyle described in the textbooks does not correspond to the reality described by the informants. Apart from slightly different local preferences and class-based differences inside a local community, housing seems to be relatively similar everywhere. Transport, in turn, is an area where local differences should be discussed much more in the textbooks, as they can have a great effect on the daily lives of people. Local political debates could also be covered more, at least to the extent they reflect local problems and things to be developed.

4.3.8 People, language and local identity

The textbook series *Smart Moves* offers a few short profile descriptions of English real-life persons, but most of these are celebrities such as, "Sugababes is a girl group from London, England" (*SM2*, Song: Ugly, 70); "Robert Peter Williams (born 13 February 1974 in Burslem, Stoke-on-Trent-Staffordshire) is an English pop singer"; "Sting is an English musician from Newcastle upon Tyne" (*SM2*, Englishman in New York, 105), (*SM2,* Song: Angels, 83). The third book of the series, *SM3* (The Greatest Album of All Time is…, 100) tells about the Liverpudlian background of the band

Beatles: “John Lennon, Paul McCartney, George Harrison and Ringo Starr were just working-class chaps from Liverpool mixing 1950s rock ‘n’ roll and skiffle…” The third textbook also tells about a Scottish crime writer, Val McDermid, who “…now lives in Manchester, England” (SM3, Murder in Mind – an interview with a crime writer, 108). Even though the informant from Reading (M1, Reading, Berkshire) says that the town is known for some celebrities, and according to the informant from Manchester the people of Manchester are proud of different innovations originating from the city, the local identities concentrate on families and the circle of friends, in other words, ordinary people.

Local behaviour, values, attitudes and priorities may not be explicitly written in textbooks, but they are still being transmitted. The sentence “When people see me on horseback, they behave in a different way than when I am on foot or in a patrol car” in *Animals at work* (*SM1*, 25), for example, contains the idea of people being used to police officers on foot, on horseback, and in patrol cars, which entails the idea of order in a big city. In the chapter *Hobbies unite* (*SM1*, 38–39), “He buys all the equipment”, “joins a club” and “always changing hobbies” imply that the family has a lot of money, as the father of the family has money for many different hobbies and equipment. However, it does not mean that all upper class or upper middle class people live in the city of London, or that Londoners are rich. In the chapter *Worlds apart* (*SM2*, 58), the attitude of the boys’ parents about their sons going to the boarding school of Eton is said to be: “they want them to get to a good university and do well in life”. Both of the examples above give a one-sided view of the ways of living in England, which according to the informants remain class-dependent. The example from *Billy Eliot* depicts the miner societies in the North in the old days as close and supportive: “With support from the other miners, Billy and his Dad finally make it to London for the audition” (*SM3*, 126).

Concerning behaviour and attitudes, an informant gives an example of, for example, how inexperience of multiculturalism in a small local community can show as a way of speaking of other

ethnicities that elsewhere would be seen as improper and offensive (example 90). On the other hand, this, as well as the narrow-mindedness or lack of interest in world issues mentioned by another informant (example 91), might depend on the level of education equally well as on the size and location of the community, or, on other factors.

> 90. It's just kind of not being…because it's a village as well it's not a town, they haven't been surrounded by that kind of you know lots of different people from different places. (M3, Chesterfield, Derbyshire)

> 91. I think people if you look at Gosbeck, areas around there, people are quite relaxed. I think people generally are a little bit less well educated, because it's quite rural and therefore I think people can be quite narrow-minded. They don't really have a great deal of interest in world issues, politics. I guess they just kind of focus on the local area, they are not too concerned about broader things. (M10, Gosbeck/Ipswich, Suffolk)

The priorities that a town is promoting are not necessarily held as priorities by everybody living in the area (example 92). In addition to the seemingly heightened community feeling and family values already mentioned earlier on northern cities and towns, in the South there seems to be commuter towns, where the life is centred on the family. This shows in the values of the people as well (example 93). An informant from Stroud (F9, Stroud, Gloucestershire) describes the local people as helpful, eccentric and hippyish, the informant from Somerset (F6, Taunton, Somerset/Devon) as old-fashioned and traditional, not very adventurous.

> 92. I suppose there were some priorities for being green and more environmental friendly. They had recycling and things like that in the area, but how many people supported it, is debatable. I don't think everyone had one particular priority. (M7, Chingford, Greater London)

> 93. I've talked about it being kind of place for families so values are fairly family-orientated. (M9, Haywards Heath, West Sussex)

Particularly the informants from Manchester (F1, Manchester, Greater Manchester) and Liverpool (M6, Liverpool, Merseyside) report on a distinctive accent, and for them it seems to be of particular

importance to be able to maintain their local dialects. Many other informants report on having a softer or milder accent nowadays than what they used to have. In the case of Liverpool the informant almost speaks of a whole different language, a "mixture of English and Irish" that is connected to the diverse population of the city. He suggests that the accent or the dialect is one of the factors why there is such a strong identification with the city and why the people of Liverpool see themselves as separate from other English people. In general, however, on the basis of the interviews, it can be stated that the old county borders seem to very much coincide with the accent borders. Compared to other cultural traits, the borders seem particularly clear between counties. Locally inside a county there can also be differences in terms of how strong the accent is (example 94), and as suggested by the informant, this can be related to how mobile the people are. Not all informants can give an example of distinctive features in their dialect (example 95). Nevertheless, there seems to be a strong North-South divide, which shows, for example, at the level of everyday vocabulary. There are expressions which are shared by different cities in the north of England, for example Hull and Manchester, but which differ from the ones used in the southern parts of the country, as example 96 illustrates.

> 94. It particularly seems to be the farming kind of sector, people living in the villages, they can really have a stronger Suffolk accent, but generally in Suffolk no. Because of movement within the country, people tend to have more of a, a much milder accent. (M10, Gosbeck/Ipswich, Suffolk)
>
> 95. I've noticed since meeting people from other regions that everyone else seems to have their own little way of saying things, but I think traditionally the Southeast doesn't tend to have so many variations of saying things. (F2, Washington, West Sussex)
>
> 96. Dinner for Hull means 'lunch', whereas other places it can mean the evening meal so this can get confusing and then for… when people would say dinner for like evening meal we just say a tea. (F8, Hull, East Yorkshire)

The clearest example of a local identity and a feeling of belongingness in the textbooks is that of a character in *All in the family* (*SM1*, 30), where a member of a family living in Reading,

England says: “We just came back from Barbados”, “It was nice to see our home country again”. This chapter tells about the multicultural families in England, and as the example shows, their regional identities can be divided between different countries.

Apart from *Billy Eliot* (*SM3*, 125–127) it is not easy to find examples of English dialects in the textbooks examined, but in the text *Sights of London* (*SM3*, 116–117) it is said that “Mind the gap is a well-known phrase heard at stations in the London Underground”. In a broader analysis this can be interpreted as being an example of a local use of language, which conveys a particular meaning to be understood only in its context.

When asked about their local identity, the informants’ answers differ (see Appendix 3). In some cases the interviewees tend to talk more about what they expect the local cultural identity of the people to be, rather than of their own local identities. It becomes clear, however, that the perception of one’s local identity is strongly connected with emotions, fondness, pride but also possible grudges. It would be good for pupils to learn to come in terms with negative emotions as well, and this is why such expressions should be included in textbooks.

The question of local identity is by no means straightforward but a relatively complex one. For this reason, it was assumed that when asking the informants about their local identity directly, there would be varied answers to this question. Some people answer that they do not have a distinctive local identity. For some people the local identity is stronger than the national identity - even to the extent that they say that instead of being English speakers, they are speakers of the local dialect.

It becomes clear from the answers that local identity is partly determined by the region, the county, city, town or village where the person comes from, but that it is as much determined by the family background. The local identity can be a mixed one. If a person’s family originally comes from a different region, he or she can feel a strong tie to that region even if he himself or she herself has never lived there. One answer given by the informants is that the parents play a big role, and for

example, an informant from Suffolk feels a strong connection to his Mancunian roots. Some informants highlight that local identity is about their accent and the way they speak.

It is not necessarily the smaller area to which people relate the most. As in the case of the informant from Liverpool (example 97):

> 97. I don't see myself as from Crosby. I see myself from Liverpool, the city. (M6, Liverpool, Merseyside)

The informants also say that the identity is connected with the people or with nature. For many informants, local identity simply means the place where you were born, community feeling and local culture (example 98):

> 98. Local identity could categorize having similar customs and beliefs, the same culture, the same way of living. (M3, Chingford, Greater London)

However, the community feeling is not necessarily seen as a good thing but some people might also find it restrictive. One informant says it is "like living in a bubble". Another informant who comes from Somerset (F6, Taunton, Somerset/Devon) says that there is generally a fear of leaving for the unknown, and that is why many young people tend to stay where their parents and earlier generations have lived. The fear of the unknown can also show as intolerance for anything different:

> 99. It's quite relaxed I would say. Friendly. You know if you go up there I guess it's friendly. It can be quite dare I say ignorant close-minded towards. I don't know if it's like that now…(M8, Seaton, Cumbria)

> 100. Again friendly people, but… they lack certain tolerance for things. They don't necessarily understand like certain dress styles or certain attitudes. But you know the people are nice and the whole place is a beautiful place. (M8, Seaton, Cumbria)

There can be a considerable lack of community feeling as well. According to one informant, this might result from the different purposes for which the towns have been built (example 101):

> 101. There's also a very big difference between the purposes of the city. Milton Keynes is a commuter city, for London. It was built as such, so it was built for people who worked in London to live, and that's

> properly why it doesn't feel very community orientated because it wasn't designed for that purpose in the first place. Whereas Northampton, it does feel much more like that. If they are gonna know down a building in their town centre, like everybody would know about it, because the buildings are very old and people care much more than… (F10, Northampton, Northamptonshire / Milton Keynes, Buckinghamshire)

Elsewhere in the interview the same informant says that because people work in London, they do not have so much time for social and community activities in their local area. Community activities can thus be thought of as one important factor in the creation of a community feeling. The example above would also seem to suggest that the buildings that have a long history can create a sense of belongingness. Local communities are also bound together by the church:

> 102. …a lot of their parishes are villages within Northampton and therefore the communities are lot stronger. People seem to care more and know their neighbours more. (F10, Northampton, Northamptonshire/Milton Keynes, Buckinghamshire)

Another thing bringing people together could be sharing their pride for the city and its heritage. It might be easier to create a stronger feeling of togetherness and belongingness if you feel that the city is generally well received:

> 103. A lot of people in Manchester are very proud of the city as well. They feel like Manchester has given a lot to the world so with sport like Manchester United and with really famous bands, rock bands and musicians, and artists as well…(F1, Manchester, Greater London)

Some informants also feel that people in their home regions have a similar sense of humour, and that there exists a mutual understanding between the people:

> 104. I feel whenever I go back home, people, I just feel more of a connection with people there, the same sense of humour and the same understanding about…just you know if you grow up in a certain area, people can talk about things that they relate to…I feel that people are different there and more, more like me. (F1, Manchester, Greater Manchester)

Some informants find it difficult to say exactly how they see their local identities but say it is a strong feeling of belonging somewhere. On the other hand, as O'Driscoll (1995, 47) says and as discussed above (see 3.2), mobility can cause a lack of identification with a place. This is shown also in the interviews (example 105):

> 105. I grew up in that county [Northamptonshire], but I've lived in, what, roughly, six or seven towns within the same county. I am…like I don't really feel at home anywhere. Like where my mum and dad lived I grew up there …I was 11. And then I moved away. And then, the longest place I've ever been is in…'cause I went school there. But I was only there for about five years as well. So in actual fact I haven't really been anywhere for longer than that. (F10, Northampton, Northamptonshire /Milton Keynes, Buckinghamshire)

In the example above, it becomes clear that local cultural identity is anything but a clear-cut matter, especially as many people do not spend all of their childhood in one place. It can be complicated by the fact that the person has moved several times. While childhood seems to play an important role in forming an attachment to a particular place, the interviews also include examples where a person wanted to adopt a new local identity, which has then more or less replaced the old one.

All in all, compared again with *Smart Moves*, the interviews say more about the English people and their thoughts and beliefs. However, it should be noted that the sample is small and that the informants themselves only represent a particular age group. Furthermore, it is sometimes hard to estimate what is an individual opinion, what a common opinion in the community, and to what extent possible auto-stereotypes should affect these views. Evaluating the underlying or acknowledged values and principles in the local communities also seems to be a difficult task for the informants. Nevertheless, it can be noted that in addition to the influence of the number of families in the area, there might also be a connection between a strong heritage and family values. Some of the informants talk about distinctive accents and dialects, whereas others cannot think of any characteristic expressions in their local area. The way the informants see their local identities differs: some feel a stronger belongingness, whereas some do not see the local identification as important.

5 Discussion

The aim of the present study has been to compare the representations of English local cultures in the English textbook series *Smart Moves* and interviews with English people. In the first section of this chapter, 5.1, I will summarise and discuss the main results in relation to what was presented in 3.2 on earlier research. In section 5.2, I will discuss the study from the perspective of reliability and validity, and the final section of this chapter, 5.3, suggests some possible implications of the study for selecting sociocultural content and raising pupils' intercultural awareness.

5.1 Representations of English local cultures: summary of main results and discussion

References to different English cities, towns and villages are found sporadic and relatively rare in the textbook series *Smart Moves*. Not as many references to English towns are included in the textbooks as could be, not to mention villages, which are not mentioned at all. Where the location is given, it is often the capital, thus, it seems almost as having opted for the easy choice. Apart from London, which dominates the books, most of the places appearing in the textbook series are mentioned only once and no further information is provided. This type of naming was already observed by Risager (1991, see 2.4) concerning textbooks in the 1990's, and it would seem to come close to the way of transmitting cultural information criticised by Liddicoat and Scarino (2013, see 2.1). A delightful exception is made by the chapter on Norwich (*SM1*, 68–69), which depicts the city and the daily life in more detail, in a way similar to the interview data.

In general, urbanity seems to dominate *Smart Moves*, which supports another observation of Risager on earlier textbooks (1991, see 2.4). Thus, the books examined do not do justice to the wide range of home regions of the English people, including those of the informants in the present study, from metropolitan cities to small hamlets in the countryside. While the location of the city, town or village is often described by the informants in relation to neighbouring bigger cities or towns, in

Smart Moves the locations of towns are either not expressed at all or only vaguely, and solely in reference to London. This would seem particularly contradictory to what Oakland (2002, see 3.2) states about the wish of certain regions, for example, the North-East and North-West to differentiate themselves from the capital. In addition, the textbooks only mention three county names, without clarifying that they are counties and not cities, whereas the interviews give information on several counties. However, in a slight contrast to what has been suggested regarding the importance of the county in terms of local and regional identities (Oakland 2002; Childs 2006, see 3.2), the interviewees tend to concentrate more on describing the city, town or village rather than the county, which might suggest that the more local level of identification is felt stronger.

As for the size of a city, town or village, the expressions vary in both materials, but more precision is found in the informants' accounts than in the textbooks examined. For example, several interviewees mention the population. In addition, some of them illustrate the size by comparing it to a Finnish town or in one case to a Nordic country. Similarly, the nature in the home region is sometimes compared to that of Finland. The textbook series lacks such comparisons altogether, which is a pity, as they would give pupils something to relate to and facilitate what Kaikkonen (2000, see 2.2) calls the two-way expansion of understanding culture. Furthermore, the pupils would probably find the content more meaningful and thus more authentic (Kaikkonen 2000, see 2.4), as it might allow an authentic response from them (Widdowson 2009, see 2.4).

In terms of nature and surroundings, the books examined include very few descriptions and mainly of urban surroundings, such as parks, whereas the range of representations of both urban and rural landscapes is much greater in the interview data. The content in the interviews would thus seem to be more representative of the cultural distinction between the metropolitan and the provincial noted by Tomaney (2010, see 3.2). On the other hand, to what extent the "attitudes to the traditions of British life" (Childs 2006, see 3.2) in the countryside differ is much more difficult to estimate. The surroundings often appear to be a mixture of both urban and rural, and in some cases

the informants also report on significant variation inside a county. On the basis of the study, it can be stated that at least nowadays the English people living in the countryside appear to have a relatively good access to cities and city life as well, even if they remain heavily dependent on the efficacy of the transport system. Several informants living at a relatively short distance from the capital say that people in their region tend to commute to London for work. On the other hand, people living in cities, especially those who live in the suburbs, also have a relatively good access to nature and countryside. Furthermore, it becomes clear that the relationship with nature mainly depends on individual preferences.

In spite of the mixture of the urban and the rural in the daily life of people, the depictions of the atmosphere in the countryside differ considerably from those of the life in cities, and they should therefore be included in textbooks as well. In the interviews, the atmosphere in the countryside is often described as quiet, rural, friendly, and some informants add that there is not much going on. When describing the city atmosphere, both the textbooks and the interviews create a picture of a busy life and crowdedness, at least in the big metropolitan cities. Both refer to some problems in big urban centres, such as riots, vandalism or the feeling of insecurity. Even if these references are rare in both materials, they are important, as they make the descriptions more realistic. Such images should be included in textbooks, in order to avoid transmitting too polished a picture on cultures.

The cosmopolitan character of metropolitan cities is mentioned both in the interviews as well as in the textbooks, but whereas the textbooks only refer to the Notting Hill Festival (SM3, *Sights of London*, 116–117), the informants tend to speak more explicitly about the multicultural population in their cities, towns and villages. In addition, some informants talk about significant differences inside a big city in terms of standard of living and lifestyles. Again, this type of information is not found in the textbooks examined.

Regarding sports and leisure, both the textbooks and interviews picture football as a national but also as a local sport and a popular leisure activity. However, the information collected by the interviews gives a deeper insight into the role that sports play in local cultures and in people's lives. The order of popularity seems to vary locally, and a link to the class-based nature of different sports is observed. Excitingly, some communities have even developed whole new sports or games distinctive to a specific region or town. As for sports and community activities, the interviews reveal both the interconnectedness of sports and pub culture and the importance of sports in the weekly life as well as a creator of a community feeling. In the interviews, strong rivalries are reported to exist between neighbouring towns or between two different teams of the same city. The textbooks examined include a picture which could be interpreted as a reference to rivalry between competing sports teams, but this subject is not explicitly discussed in the books. No direct mention of sports' importance for the county level of identification (cf. Oakland 2002, see 3.2) is found neither in the textbooks nor in the interviews.

As for leisure activities other than sports, both the textbooks and the interviewees mention entertainment, such as cinema, shopping and visiting museums. However, the interviews also show how much the local possibilities can vary, as people may need to or want to travel elsewhere for leisure activities. In particular, many people living in small villages in the countryside or in small towns seem to want to benefit from leisure possibilities in the neighbouring towns. Pubs are mentioned in both books and interviews as the most popular meeting places. Locally there can be, however, some special clubs or societies or old traditions, such as working men's clubs, which do not exist nationwide. These traditions as well as possible class and age differences in terms of preferences are mentioned by some informants, but not in the textbook series.

Many local traditions that the informants report on seem to be based on local history, heritage and local beliefs. The different types of towns and villages mentioned by the informants include, for example, market towns, mill towns, towns with fishing industry, port towns, working class villages,

towns situated in the suburbs of the capital and new post-war towns. This list partly coincides with the different types mentioned by Childs (2006, see 3.2). In the textbooks examined, the discussion of the history and heritage of cities and towns is restricted to mentioning the Roman background of Norwich and describing a fictional town in a story as a mill town.

The informants' accounts support Childs' view (2006, see 3.2) on English cities, towns and villages having "their distinctive characteristics or annual events". However, one informant reports that his hometown is generally seen as one of the most generic towns in the UK. Another common factor found is the nature-relatedness of traditions, and adjacent counties sometimes have got similar traditions. In general, both the English countryside and towns and cities seem to offer great venues for various events and competitions. The lively descriptions of such traditions by the informants seem to support what is noted by Kramsch (1993, see 2.1) and other scholars as the "aim of developing an understanding of differences and a positive attitude towards cultures".

Commemorative events are not found very typical, but the examples include events inspired by a person who helped to abolish the slavery, famous inventors or personalities as well as the Diamond Jubilee. Music and arts are commonly involved in many events, which in addition to village fairs are mentioned as events that bring the local community together. In contrast to the traditions mentioned by the informants, the traditions discussed in the textbook series seem to be of a small number and of a more touristic nature, such as the Changing of the Guard in London. However, new traditions are being developed, and also some informants mention events marketed especially for tourists.

Due to the extensive interview material, other aspects of local cultures and the everyday life, such as educational possibilities, work, housing, transport and local politics are analysed in this study at a relatively general level. Education possibilities and housing appear to be relatively similar in different parts of England. However, while some informants report on notable differences between local schools and their quality as well as different housing areas inside a city, the textbooks

examined do not discuss this type of variation. Informants originating from metropolitan cities report on a great range of professions, whereas in some other areas the opportunities seem more restricted. Traditional professions related to the heritage of a town or village are also mentioned and discussed in relation to some local traditions. The textbook series discusses only a few professions which are related to location, such as that of the mounted police in London. Descriptions of local transport are more varied in the interview data, as *Smart Moves* lacks information on transport connections in the countryside, concentrating again on London as well as on the Eurostar.

Oakland's (2002, 3.2) list of particular dimensions of local culture, the strongest components of the local identity is apt: sports, politics, food, habits, competitions, cultural activities and a specific way of life, with the exception of local food traditions. Many informants say that the English cuisine has been influenced by several other cultures, and that there are not many local specialities. To what extent people follow local politics is also debatable.

While the textbook series examined does not explicitly discuss the local identities of the English people, the interviews conducted for this study show that there are English people who do not seem to have a strong local cultural identity but at the same time also people who "can't help but belong" (Fry 2011, see 3.1). The study seems to support Childs' (2006, see 3.2) observation that people with the strongest local identities have the most distinctive dialects. The present study also supports the view of several scholars presented in 3.2 that the identification with the local area appears to be somewhat stronger in the north of England than in the South. Even if it is not possible to make generalisations based on a small number of interviewees, the data seems to support the suggestion of Oakland (2002, 10) and O'Driscoll (1995, 47) that the local identity is particularly strong in Manchester, Liverpool and London. At least the local identities of the informants originating from Liverpool and Manchester appear to be very strong. Regarding county loyalties, which were found strong in Cornwall and Yorkshire by O' Driscoll (1995, 47), it was noted that an interviewee coming from East Yorkshire seemed to have a particularly strong local identity, even

though it seemed to show more at the level of towns. It was not possible to interview people from Cornwall. In general, supporting what Tomaney (2010, see 3.2) says about the local and community feeling in the North, a seemingly strong communal feeling is reported by some of the informants coming from towns and cities in Northern England. In general, traditions and sports seem to bring people together both in towns and villages. Even if suggested by Childs (2006, see 3.2), on the basis of this study, it is not possible to say whether communal identities are stronger in villages. No clear sign of sports as a major contributor to county loyalties (cf. Childs 2006, see 3.2) is found, but at the level of accent boundaries the county connection appears to be strong.

To what extent the inhabitants can be seen to have distinctive traits (ibid.) remains a question, as grouping people could easily lead to too strong generalisations. Coming back to the definition of culture by anthropologists (Brøgger 1992, see 2.1), it seemed to be easier for the interviewees to speak about "actual behaviour and empirically observable features" (ibid.) than views of the world, ideas and values, especially when asked to describe those shared by the local community. Attitudes, values and priorities, where McCormick (2003, see 3.2) observes local differences, can sometimes be unconscious or be seen as something that is personal and not shared by a community. Therefore, perhaps in the fear of producing stereotypes, the interviewees seem to be careful about what they say. However, some attributes such as 'helpful', 'old-fashioned and traditional' are given to the local people by the informants, and especially family values are mentioned as values common to a community. Identifying certain shared priorities of people appears to be equally difficult for the informants. Therefore, to conclude, it should be pointed out that for many people the unifying thing can simply be the surroundings. As Sihvola (2000, see 3.1) notes, love for the surroundings can sometimes create a stronger feeling of local identity and belongingness than the people.

5.2 Observations on the reliability and validity of the study

The present qualitative study, which employs both the textbook series *Smart Moves* and English people's interviews as its material, concentrates on English local cultures and identities. Texts which do not mention English cities, towns or villages were not included in the analysis. Therefore, to be able to see how local cultures are treated in a single book series in general, all textbook chapters as well as other materials should be analysed. Furthermore, even though a quick look at a few other English textbook series seems to support the findings of this study, it should be pointed out that analysing a different textbook series could produce somewhat different results.

The interview data was found not only to permit more detailed descriptions of local cultures than in the textbooks examined, but also to give an insight into a local person's perspective and thoughts. However, as was noticed during the research process, a slightly different set of questions might have encouraged the interviewees to share even more personal experiences. The informants' own experiences were found a particularly good way to illustrate the phenomena related to local cultures and identities. At the same time, it is good to be aware of what Durant (1997, see 2.4) notes about the uniqueness of the experience challenging its representativeness. In this study, however, representativeness has mainly been discussed in terms of acknowledging that there is local variation, and that it is important to include content on this variety in order to enhance and ensure the balance of representations, instead of aiming at generalisations on particular local cultures. However, the sample, 20 interviews, was found to be more than sufficient for the purpose of the present study, also allowing some tentative, general observations. On the other hand, as not all the material collected could be discussed in the closer analysis of the data, it is important to note that taking examples always remains a subjective decision. In other words, different examples might illustrate other phenomena still.

Asking people to describe something that is typical of an area might result in a lacking consideration of other variables, such as age, class or gender, not to mention subcultures, the

influence of family and friends as well as personal preferences. As the interviews showed, for example, people's relationship with nature is something that can be seen to belong to the personal side of the culture, whereas local traditions tend to be shared by the local community. Therefore, even if the interview data can be considered relatively reliable, the possibility of stereotypes must be taken into account.

In general, both heterostereotypes and autostereotypes discussed by Kane (1991, see 2.4) could affect the interviews. For example, an interviewee might be trying to meet the interviewer's expectations, or they might feel the pressure as representatives of a certain local culture (see 4.1.2.2) to say what they presume that people in their own countries or elsewhere typically associate with it, rather than talking about their own experience which might, in fact, be closer to the experience of the local community as a whole as well. Lehtonen (1997, see 3.1) has noted that the notion of collective identity is related to that of a stereotype. Hopefully, however, this study has succeeded in avoiding stereotypical ways of thinking about English local cultures.

5.3 Implications for the selection of sociocultural content

If thinking of Neuner's (1997, see 2.2) subject-oriented criteria, the criteria of teachability / learnability and the learner-oriented criteria for choosing sociocultural content, the *Bits 'n' Pieces* pages can be seen as subject-matter-oriented, as these texts tend to be list-like. While being practical fact files on the one hand, on the other hand the way the information is presented is likely to make the learner lose his or her interest after a while. The teachability will be commented on towards the end of this section. As for the learner-oriented criteria, the data gathered by interviewing native informants would seem applicable as possible content for textbooks, as it includes information on the everyday life, contrastive and comparative aspects as well as content on the specific interests of groups or individuals (Neuner 1997, see 2.2). *Smart Moves* seems to take these criteria into consideration as well, but to a lesser extent. In other words, even if the way this

study examines to which extent native informants could be used as a possible source for cultural contents might be seen as somewhat modernist (see 2.1), it is, nevertheless, equally supportive of the postmodernist view that context and content selection should be guided by learners' experience and interests (Risager 2007, see 2.1).

The general aim for foreign language education, mentioned in the *CEFR*, is "to achieve a wider and deeper understanding of the way of life and forms of thought of other peoples and of their cultural heritage" (see 2.4). In this respect, the informants' accounts would seem to complement the information provided by the textbook series *Smart Movies*. However, it should be noted that the choice of cultural contents is subjective and that textbooks remain reproductions. The authenticity (see 2.4) will never be the same as when meeting people face to face in the target cultures. Risager (1991, see 2.4) sees interviews as a typical but "rather impersonal" situation for textbook characters to express their opinions. In a way, this could also be seen as criticism towards the material suggested in the current study if considering interviews as not the most natural way of gathering or providing cultural information. Nevertheless, the present study discusses the benefits of including real-life examples and voices instead of invented stories. One way to make sure that there is a good range of different voices is to think about local cultures and identities.

As discussed in 2.3, the *Finnish National Core Curriculum* states that at the secondary school level the pupils are expected to be able to read texts with a clear structure. Therefore, when using interview examples, such as the ones given in this study, special attention should be paid to the length and language level of these texts. Including long interviews might not be the ideal way of adding cultural content to textbooks. Instead, the interview extracts included should be short. In some cases, taking the language level of the pupils into consideration might mean at least partial adaptation of the extracts. Furthermore, local informants could also be used as an additional source of inspiration when thinking about possible topics.

As for topics and their teachability, some of them, such as local traditions, leisure time, work and education could be easily discussed at the secondary level and combined with other contents. However, local politics, for example, might turn out to be challenging for young pupils and to make them interesting for them, the extracts should be carefully chosen. Additional attention should be paid to the age of pupils and the educational task of the school, as the informants might also talk about topics such as alcohol and drinking in their accounts.

6 Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to examine how the English local cultures are represented in the textbook series *Smart Moves* and in English people's interviews, and to what extent similarities and differences could be found. Local cultural traits seem to be especially prevalent in local events and traditions, professions and heritage. On the basis of the study, it can be concluded that the textbooks examined include some descriptions of local cultures, but that they are less detailed and not as varied as those provided by the informants. The textbooks concentrate on describing city life and particularly London from a relatively touristic point of view, whereas the interview data gives a more diverse picture of England, including cities, towns and villages and elaborating on various local traditions, leisure activities and the daily life. In particular, the personal experiences of the informants give a good insight into both the local daily life and local identities.

In general, in order to break stereotypical images, it is important to give more space for variety in textbooks and become more aware of biased ways of thinking about cultures. The aim of the present study has not been to recommend native speakers as sole informants or to say that learning materials, whether textbooks or online materials, should be concerned with local variation in England in particular. Instead, it is suggested that the aspect presented here could be easily applied to any culture and to the learning and teaching of any (language) subject. This study has shown that in the age of globalisation, local cultural variation and local cultural identities still exist

and should be considered in textbook writing, alongside national trends and in spite of transcultural tendencies. Local cultures and the way the local intertwines with other levels of cultural identification should be studied further. Topics for further research could include, for example, class distinction, subcultures and autostereotypes in relation to local cultures and identities. In general, the present study will hopefully invite more research on local cultures, especially in the field of EFL, and it could act as a possible starting point for these studies.

In learning about local and regional cultures, the aim should not be that pupils know everything about each region. After all, it cannot be expected that foreigners are familiar with all the hidden rules of the society and the vast number of cities, towns and villages. In a communication situation the responsibility is always mutual. Nevertheless, pupils should be given a chance to become aware of the richness of local cultures. Looking at things from a local perspective, learning about the daily life in local communities and people's identities, and thus understanding them better is sure to enhance communication. At the same time, however, by the means of comparison, it also enables one to construct one's own local identity.

In general, language teachers should strive to create better networks themselves and establish partnerships. Inviting visitors who represent and talk about different national and local cultures can support the teaching of cultural contents as well as boost learner motivation. Similarly, pupils' own experiences of cultures should be taken as starting points for discussion, and they could be compared with interview extracts or other materials. After all, not all cultural information is learnt during English lessons, but it is also acquired by travelling with family, watching TV series, reading internet blogs and watching YouTube videos. The new trend to start digitalising textbooks allows the merging of different types of sources better than before, as well as enabling the textbook writers to update and add contents. All in all, for teaching and learning about cultures, the new possibilities created by technology would seem immense.

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Appendix 1.

Occurrences in the textbook series Smart Moves.

(Table 1. Region)

REGION	SMART MOVES 1	SMART MOVES 2	SMART MOVES 3
Name of a region/county/city/town/village/ mentioned	p. 10 *Smart Talk* – practise: Liverpool (1); Manchester (1); p. 25 *Animals at work*: London (1); p. 30 *All in the family*: Reading (1); p. 38 *Hobbies unite*: South East London (1); pp. 42 - 43 *A trip to France* – map & text: Swindon (2), London (3), Folkestone (1); pp. 46 – 48 *Normandy – here we come*: London (1), Folkestone (1); pp. 52 – 53 *Postcards from France*: Bristol (1), London (1); p. 63 *Reader: The case of the*	p. 58 *Worlds apart*: Eton (8), London (1); pp. 66 – 67 *Welcome to my planet*: Liverpool (1), Manchester (1), Brighton (1), Devon (1); p. 70 *Song: Ugly*: London (1); p. 83 *Song: Angels*: Burslem (1), Stoke-on-Trent (1), Staffordshire (1); p. 105 *Song: Englishman in New York*: Newcastle upon	p. 100 *The Greatest Album of All Time is…*: Liverpool (1); pp. 108–109 *Murder in Mind – Interview with a crime writer*: Manchester (1), Oxford (2); p. 111 *Reader: The Torment of Others*: Bradfield (fictional city) (3); pp. 114–115 *England – Bits 'n' Pieces*: London (2), Birmingham (2), Leeds (2),

	missing pen pal: London (1); p. 66 – 69 *Friendship across the sea*: Norwich (12), London (1), Sheffield (1)	Tyne (1)	Sheffield (1), Bradford (2), Liverpool (2), Manchester (2), Salisbury (1), Stonehenge (1), Brighton (1), Yorkshire (1); pp. 116 – 117 *Sights of London*: London (21); p. 124 *News through different eyes*: London (1); pp. 125-127 *Reader: Billy Elliot*: [no name], London (3), Newcastle (1)
Size, atmosphere and location	p. 25 (London) 'heavy traffic, noisy demonstrations, football matches and even riots'; '- - to stand the life in the city'; pp. 68 – 69 (Norwich) 'in the east,	p. 58 (Eton) 'about 30 kilometres west of London'	p. 111 'Bradfield, a fictional northern English city'; p. 114 'Capital: London'; 'Other big cities: Birmingham,

	about 185 kilometres from London; ‘a pretty old city, from 62 AD when the Romans were here first. Then the Normans came and built our castle and cathedral between 1067 and 1120 – these buildings are still standing”, p.75 ‘nearby corner shop’		Leeds, Sheffield, Bradford, Liverpool, Manchester; p.116 ‘London is a city of museums’; p. 125 ‘a small mining town in northern England’,
Nature, surroundings and local people’s relation to nature	p. 68 ‘Swans on river Wensum’		pp. 116 – 117 ‘There are a lot of parks in London’
Comparison between other regions/cities/towns/villages in England; comparison between between other regions/cities/towns/villages in Finland			

(Table 2. People and language)

PEOPLE AND LANGUAGE	SMART MOVES 1	SMART MOVES 2	SMART MOVES 3

Well-known locals		p. 70 ‘Sugababes is a girl group from London, England’, p. 83 ‘Robert Peter Williams (born 13 February 1974 in Burslem, Stoke-on-Trent-Staffordshire) is an English pop singer’; p. 105 ‘Sting is an English musician from Newcastle upon Tyne’	p. 100 ‘John Lennon, Paul McCartney, George Harrison and Ringo Starr were just working-class chaps from Liverpool mixing 1950s rock ‘n’ roll and skiffle…’, p. 108, (Val McDermid) ‘now lives in Manchester, England’
Behaviour, values, attitudes and priorities	p. 25 ‘When people see me on horseback, they behave in a different way than when I am on foot or in a patrol car’; p. 39 ‘He buys all the equipment - - joins a club’, ‘always changing hobbies’	p. 58 ‘they want them to get to a good university and do well in life’	p. 126 ‘With support from the other miners, Billy and his Dad finally make it to London for the audition’
Relation to the home	p.30 ‘We just came back from Barbados - - It was nice to see		

region/town/city/village; proud of/not so proud of, feeling of belonging	our home country again'		
Dialect			p. 116 'Mind the gap is a well-known phrase heard at stations in the London Underground'

(Table 3. Way of living and traditions)

WAY OF LIVING AND TRADITIONS	SMART MOVES 1	SMART MOVES 2	SMART MOVES 3
Work and education	p. 25 'The mounted police is one of the best jobs in the world'; p. 38, 'school in South East London'; 'football star'; 'sports journalist'; p. 43 'engineer', 'housewife'; p. 69	p. 58 'There's a private boarding school for boys only – no girls are allowed', 'Eton College is a really	p. 125 'miners' strike'; 'Royal Ballet School in London'; p. 108 'She was educated in Oxford', p. 108, 'get into Oxford at 16'

	‘we have a university’	old school’, ‘Eton has produced great men in politics, for example’	
Housing and transport	p. 25, ‘on foot’, ‘patrol car’, ‘police horse’; p.30 ‘They bought a house here in Reading’; p.38 ‘pick them up’; pp. 42 – 43 Channel Tunnel; Stagecoach (picture); p. 43 ferry, boat, plane, train, Eurostar train from Swindon to London; p.46 Eurostar – passenger rail travel from London to Paris; Waterloo International; p. 69 pictures ‘I’ll enclose a few pictures of Norwich and of our house so you can see what some of our houses are like’	p. 58 ‘boarding school’, ‘study-bedrooms’	p. 116 ‘Over three million people use the Tube every day’, ‘Right next to the Tower is Tower Bridge, another symbol of London. The bridge was opened in 1894 and has sophisticated engineering, which opens the middle portion of the bridge so that tall ships can sail through’
Local politics and things to be developed	p. 25 heavy traffic, noisy demonstrations - -and even riots		p. 116 ‘The Houses of Parliament is the meeting place for both the seats of Parliament, the House of Commons and the House

			of Lords. You may even go in to watch a debate when Parliament is in session'; 'Another IRA bomb in London'
Sports and leisure time	p. 25 football matches; pp.38 - 39 Arsenal - - all their home matches; practice regularly at their local football club; five-a-side match; aerobics class; golf; pictures: football, ramblers, Arsenal, fishing; p. 43 'dinner table', 'watching TV', travel; pp. 68 – 69 Norwich City vs. Sheffield United (picture); Norwich by night (picture); Swans on river Wensum (picture); 'lots of museums, some art galleries and concert halls', 'cinemas with good films, theatres, sports grounds and a great football team', ' a dry ski slope', 'famous for its pubs and churches'	p.58 'different activities like sports and music', 'rowing, cricket and tennis'	pp.116-117 'London is a city of museums'; 'Piccadilly Circus has theatres, shopping arcades and entertainment centres around it'; 'Several of England's best football teams come from London. Chelsea, Arsenal, Fulham, Tottenham Hotspur, Watford as well as West Ham all play in the Premier League.'; 'To really get a bird's eye view of London, you have to ride the London Eye'; 'There are a lot of parks in London. In central London there are

			five Royal Parks. Green Park, St. James Park, Hyde Park, Kensington Gardens and Regent's Park allow visitors and Londoners alike some time off'; 'When shopping in London, do not forget to visit England's most famous department store, Harrods', p. 125 'In the same village hall as his boxing club is the girls' ballet class…', 'Royal Ballet School in London'; 'Newcastle United strip'
Social and community activities	p. 38 local football club; pp. 68 – 69 Norwich Cathedral (picture); 'They say that there is a pub for every day of the year and a church for every Sunday of the year'		
Traditions and annual events	p.25 Changing of the Guard (picture)		p. 117 'The Changing of the Guard takes place in

			the forecourt of Buckingham Palace…'; 'By the way, if the flag is flying on the mast of Buckingham Palace it means that the Queen is in residence'; 'Hyde Park is famous for its Speakers' Corner, which has for centuries been the place in London where you can go and give a speech'; 'If you have a chance to visit London at the end of August, do not miss Notting Hill Carnival. It is Europe's biggest street carnival with Caribbean bands and dancers dressed in fantastic costumes'
Food specialities			p. 115 '…Yorkshire pudding – scones and tea with milk'

Appendix 2.

Interview questions.

1. What is your name and how old are you?

2. Where do you live at the moment?

3. Where do you originally come from?

4. How would you describe the region and county and the city/town/village where you come from in terms of their size and atmosphere?

5. Please describe the nature in the region where you come from.

6. What is the relation of the local people to nature in that region like? What do the nature and the surroundings mean to you and to other people in that region?

7. How would you in general describe the way of living there?

8. Where do people work and what are the biggest employers in the region you come from?

9. Tell me about schools and studying, education possibilities in that region. Do children/ young people travel elsewhere to attend school?

10. Tell me about the housing and transport there.

11. Please tell me how local politics show in the everyday life and how you would characterize the political atmosphere in the region you come from. Are there some local debates on some particular topics at the moment (problems, things to be developed)?

12. What do people usually do in their leisure time in that region?

13. Tell me about the typical sports of that region.

14. Tell me about social and community activities. For example, where do people usually meet or gather?

15. Tell me about traditions and annual events in the region where you come from. For example, traditions you might have on some special days, national celebrations, or for

commemorating local people etc.?

16. Tell me about typical food and specialities in the region where you come from.

17. Tell me about the distinctive features of your dialect. Are there particular expressions you use that are typical of the region/town/village where you come from?

18. Is there something you are particularly proud of / not so proud of in your original home region/city/town/village?

19. How would you characterize the people living in the region you come from, for example, in terms of their behaviour, values, attitudes and priorities?

20. What is the stereotypical image of people living in the region you come from? / Is this also the stereotypical image of the people there?

21. To what extent do you think these are stereotypes or descriptive and true?

22. When did you move to your current hometown?

23. What differences have you noticed between your earlier region/hometown/village and where you live now?

24. Have your customs, way of living or speaking changed or stayed the same in the new region?

25. Please tell me about characteristics that you connect/relate/associate to English people from certain bigger areas, regions, towns or villages?

26. What makes up a local identity, in your opinion, and what does it mean to you?

(27. Have you noticed a change in your local identity since you arrived in Finland?)

Appendix 3.

Interviews. Example: Local identity.

What makes up a local identity and what does it mean to you?

It's…community aspect. I suppose growing up in a certain place, where you know your neighbours and your school friends don't live too far away from you, and then you have shared experiences as you're growing up…I suppose how your family bring[s] you up to be being proud of where you are from. (F1, Manchester, Greater Manchester)

I would say the countryside and nature around you…I would like to say local traditions and things like that. I guess more than anything else it's probably the people that you know from that place and you associate with that place. That's why you have such strong ties where you're from. (F2, Washington, West Sussex)

Shaped by the people that are there and how their interests are accounted for…I wouldn't really think of my identity being particularly shaped by where I come from…It's interesting to probably think of people's perceptions of me and where I come from…I feel like I fit in a lot better here. I don't regret the fact that I've lived in Croydon, because it's probably good to experience that way of life, and I do kind of have a soft spot for it, but I don't think I ever want to live there again. I suppose I don't have a very strong tie to the place, to be honest. I had a lot of good times time, I met amazing friends there, my parents still live there so I still go back there.…It's pretty terrible, but it's still my hometown. (F3, Croydon, Greater London)

I suppose the local identity, it's kind of…want to be connected to nature, connected to the countryside around and not being stuck in the city, being able to get outside.
(M2, Rothwell, Northamptonshire)

I do think that the whole Essex girl stereotype and Essex lad stereotype. It's now almost something to be proud of if you come from Essex and it definitely makes up some of the cultural identity of the area…Those stereotypes are actually a big part of the local identity now. I've never really fully participated in it…I could be bit of an outsider to the Essex stereotype. It can be a bit embarrassing sometimes, but sometimes you're kind of proud it as well…There's something special about Essex, there's something special about the people there, they are just not like they are anywhere else. (F4, Romford, Greater London)

Not something too much I associate now…When I think about where I grew up, it was almost like living in a bubble. Everyone kind of speaking the same way and doing the same things and saying the same things… Looking back now I guess it's not so much a good thing, and I actually prefer it here where there's not really one identity and people come from everywhere and they share it. (F5, Radlett, Hertfordshire)

…how you've been brought up, how your parents have brought you up. Perhaps the landscape that you've grown up in, whether that being city, whether that being countryside. Places that are very kind of rural will be perhaps a little bit more closed off, because they are not as well connected, whereas obviously cities, sometimes being colder places because there are more people, but then again you could say that with the closed off idea with the small towns…Landscape, I think accent has a big thing to play of how….certainly how other people see you. (M3, Chesterfield, Derbyshire)

I think it's something that everyone can feel proud about…something everyone can agree on, I suppose. And sometimes even I think where I'm from, you have the thing where everyone goes you are farmers, but I think people in Somerset kind of embrace that a little bit…because they think it's kind of funny, makes them kind of special in some ways. People sometimes like use that as part of their identity, but they like the fact that other people see them like that. That's kind of big part of that. So where I'm from it's not so much about the actual community. (F6, Taunton, Somerset/Devon)

I think the local identity is different for different people. For me it means absolutely nothing …because I was born and raised in Devon, then I moved to Wales, where I lived Welsh...(M4, Sidmouth, Devon)

Where you're from has a huge impact on who you are. A huge part of who I am is because I went to certain high school and mixed with certain people and they influenced me…It's hugely affected who I am as a person…When I meet Londoners I feel that we've got something in common, and I think that that will happen for the rest of my life. (M5, Harrow, Greater London)

I'd say anywhere in the country I think the local identity is made of from parents. …came from working class background…what they were brought up to believe in. I still judge myself as quite working class, even though I'm middle class really. I feel more allegiance to the poorer working class in Liverpool than the richer…The local identity is very important in Liverpool. People see themselves as from Liverpool as not from England. People speak Scouts and not English…It means a lot to me. I probably will move to London, but I'd always see myself as from Liverpool. I never wanna lose my accent. (M6, Liverpool, Merseyside)

Local identity could categorize as having similar customs and beliefs, the same culture…what else could it be…just the same way of living. (M7, Chingford, Greater London)

It's hard to sort of like have like a concrete identity, because like I said I don't feel that it's that much different for me living in my county than a person in another county. I mean people might judge you differently if they know you live in sort of a nicer area. (F7, Watton-at-Stone, Hertfordshire)

My personal local identity? I don't have one. I wasn't particularly anyone in that village. ….A little respect from people…The place where I grew up. The place where I have a lot of childhood memories, good and bad. I spent a lot of time there. I don't have a personal attachment to it. There was and is a lot of stuff I don't like about that place. (M8, Seaton, Cumbria)

Not much…in a sad way. If you meet somebody from the same area you'd be happy to see them, you'd identify yourself as coming from the same area. (M9, Haywards Heath, West Sussex)

I don't know. I don't feel like I have one. I don't really feel at home where I am so I don't know what the local identity would be. (F10, Northampton, Northamptonshire /Milton Keynes, Buckinghamshire)

I think a local identity can kind of be like characterized by maybe a distinct accent or way of speaking. It could be associated with like customs or things that are only popular in a certain area. Being able to tell where someone's from…Being distinct from other regions of the same country.
I don't consider myself to have a local identity, because I'm not from a place that has a strong identity as such, because it's not a place with a prominent local culture…Whereas people from

certain places…you could easily tell where they are from just by hearing them. (M1, Reading, Berkshire)

I think it's really important to feel a connection to where you're from, but I don't know what my local identity actually is. I feel a strong connection to Hull, but I don't really know what makes me have that identity, because neither of my parents are from Hull either. I guess in Hull I'm bit of an outsider too. The cultural identity…to be from Hull, you've experienced quite a lot of things in your life. (F8, Hull, East Yorkshire)

I think to be a Stroudie is quite a cool thing…I think it's quite a nice identity to have. It's such a pretty town, we're very lucky…If I think about Stroud, I just think about being a town and country…I think the community feel is quite nice, a local identity to have. Friends I had at school are the friends I have now…still very close…I'm quite proud to live where I am...I'm very very lucky where I live. (F9, Stroud, Gloucestershire)

To me that would mean where you're born. Also where your family are from…in my case, I think have less of a local identity than most people, or..a typical person, because my family is from Manchester so I still feel some kind of a local identity with the North as well as the South so I don't have a strong local identity. That's mainly it, other than kind of what you kind of do, what kind of happens in the streets and ways of life. (M10, Gosbeck/Ipswich, Suffolk)

Appendix 4.

Form of consent.

Research Study

CONSENT FORM

You are invited to take part in a research study on regional cultural identities in England, which is carried out by Tiina Rautiainen as part of her MA Thesis project for the English Department at the School of Language, Translation and Literary Studies at the University of Tampere in Finland.

The data collected by interviews will only be used for the non-profit research purposes of this study. The recordings will not be published at any point and they will only be accessible to the interviewer herself who is the only person transcribing the interviews. The names of the interviewees will be changed during the process of transcribing. All necessary measures will be taken to the best of the interviewer's ability to guarantee that the person interviewed should not be recognisable on the basis of the data referred to in the final version of the Master's Thesis.

I hereby give my consent that the data collected by the interview may be used for the purpose of the study in question in the way described above and may be referred to in the final version of the Master's Thesis including direct quotes.

Date and place:

Name and signature: